

Harry Potter and the Rejected Path - NC-17 – Sexually explicit scenes & references to other nasty stuff

DISCLAIMER THE FIRST: It is by JKR's writing alone I set my mind in motion. It is by the grace of coffee that thoughts acquire speed, the back acquires strains, the strains become a warning. The warning is that I make no money from this. It is by JKR's writing alone I set my mind in motion.

DISCLAIMER THE SECOND: This is a AU take on JKR's writings that involve explicit sex, descriptions and references to acts that all good folk should deplore as well as other sexual situations that might be thought of as disturbing to some. If your mind melts or your soul becomes like pitch because of this, I take no responsibility: you were warned!

DISCLAIMER THE THIRD: Again this is an AU take. If you see something that is "wrong" in relation to canon, hang on a bit, it will probably be explained. Often the reason for the change will be in the author's note at the end of the chapter. If it isn't explained after a few chapters, please review the chapter and point this out. I am writing multiple stories and sometimes I mix them up so your comments are appreciated.

CHAPTER ONE – I REFUSE

NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996

Harry looked down from the tower window. He couldn't see the Quidditch pitch but he could hear the cheers and groans as well as the magnified voice of Quincy Rivers, the new announcer who was in his year in Ravenclaw. Harry gave a snort of disgust at the thought of 'his year' since he hadn't had one class since the start of term. Funny how he had traded one jail cell of his relatives house for a new one here at Hogwarts.

All things considering, he wouldn't have it any other way.

Harry turned away from the window and wondered if he could get Dobby to fashion him an iron mask. If he was going to be trapped in a tower he should look the part, right? Harry wanted to laugh at this but he had noticed that he was starting to talk to himself or Hedwig

far too much so he kept quiet. He knew that Dumbledore was trying to break him by keeping him locked up here. Not that the Old Man would admit to that or even think to himself that is what he was actually trying to do.

Harry was glad that he at least had Hedwig for company. It went without saying that he was upset by the charm that had been placed on her so that she was unable to carry any messages. Heaven forbid that Harry write to a solicitor or the Goblins or even a quick note to his friends.

Not that any of his 'friends' had done much to help him out and certainly didn't look like anyone in the D.A. had the stones to try anything. With the Twins gone, it seemed no one had the guts to try to brave the tower to try and see him. About the only time he saw people these days was students on the grounds or on the nearby Astronomy tower. Harry was surprised that Ginny or even Luna hadn't tried to see him. He hadn't expected Hermione to try. Given her prefect status, he knew her love of rules would keep her away. Of course he was pretty sure of the fact that McGonagall and the Old Man were probably leaning on her pretty hard.

Harry was, however, sorry that Neville hadn't tried. He had talked to Neville while waiting for the train and he had seemed a lot more confident especially with his new wand. Harry had felt he was almost a new person and he missed being able to hang out with the new and improved Neville. He hadn't even sat with Harry on the train because he was off chatting up Susan Bones and Hannah Abbot. Harry smiled at the thought of shy Neville finally being brave enough to go after what he wanted.

That Ron hadn't tried wasn't surprising since he might still be in St. Mungo's. Neville had told him that those 'brains' had actually been creatures called Cognivores and they fed on thoughts. Apparently studying them was one of the things the Unspeakables did. Ginny had chimed in and told them the Healers predicted Ron might even miss the first week or so of class while they made sure there wasn't any long term damage to his mind.

So Harry sat back down on his bed and grabbed a book and got back to his reading. McGonagall had made sure that he had access to his school books relating to the subjects he could do while cooped up in the room. It was a shame really that the first year he had

actually looked forward to potions class was the year he hadn't been able attend. He wondered what sort of teacher Slughorn was like.

Of course he hadn't been lying when he said he wasn't going to play their Hogwarts games. He had done more work on his own, especially brushing up on his French. Either Dumbledore didn't know or didn't care but Dobby had been able to bring him books so he wasn't dependent on the books he was allowed. Hermione, if she had bothered to try and see him, would probably be rather pleased with how much he was studying these days. Of course when it was about all you were allowed it did become the focus of one's world.

He had to admit that he felt like he was learning more locked in tower of the mostly unused wing of Hogwarts. Harry thought it a bit ironic he was a few stories above the room where Fluffy had been kept. Since he was locked away from other students and none had tried to contact him, he was left to reading and teaching himself. Harry wasn't sure if the amount he had learned of late from books meant he had never applied himself or that the quality of Hogwarts teaching staff was as wretched as some said.

Of course there were limits to what he could teach himself since he didn't have a wand. He hadn't had a wand since he had thrown it down on Dumbledore's desk the first day of term.

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HOGWARTS EXPRESS, SEPTEMBER 1st 1996 – AFTERNOON

Draco Malfoy's nose made a satisfying sound as it broke under Harry's fist. As the white-haired ponce hit the floor of the hallway, his twin goons at first had a look of shock on their faces before they belatedly remembered their jobs as being the bodyguard to the screaming teen on the floor. Crabbe reacted first and therefore was recipient to Harry's next move which was a swift kick to his crotch. Crabbe made a rather odd noise that sounded like, "Derp!" and collapsed like a marionette with its strings cut. Goyle reached out to grab Harry from behind when he was thrown up against the door of the car by an unseen force. Luckily for him Harry had been in the last compartment of the car and so he didn't have far to go before smashing into it. Like Crabbe, he hit the floor like a sack of potatoes. Unlike his counterpart he wasn't conscious.

Harry could hear the shocked gasps from down the aisle-way. Obviously everyone in the car had seen Draco and his goons walk down to his compartment and all had stuck their heads out to watch the show. Once again no one had done or said a thing to warn him. Heaven forbid they were denied their dose of drama! This angered the already enraged Harry. He reached down and roughly grabbed the bleeding Malfoy and hustled him up against the door across from his own compartment. A quartet of what looked like Third Year girls quaked in fear behind the glass at the look in Harry's eyes. Harry ignored them as he slapped the struggling teen to shut him up and then batted Draco's wand away from him.

Harry looked into Draco's eyes, eyes that were wide with shock and not a little fear. There was a Harry that would have reveled in getting that look from Draco. There was another Harry who would be ashamed at what he had allowed the Slytherin to provoke him into doing. Today, however, the Harry holding Draco by the throat didn't feel shame or amusement. If Draco could have been asked what he thought Harry was feeling, the teen would have had to say murderous rage.

"You don't know when to stop, do you Draco? I keep defeating your master Voldemort and you don't stop. I take your house elf from dad and you don't stop. I beat you down in Quidditch and you don't stop. I hide a group of people I'm training from you and the Inquisitorial Squad and the only reason you found me was due to a bitter girl and you don't stop. I've gone toe-to-toe with dementors, a dragon and a bloody basilisk and you don't stop. With only five other students I beat your dad, eleven other Death Eaters and oh, yeah, Voldemort again AND STILL YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO STOP!"

Draco tried to speak, whether to plead or scream, the onlookers couldn't tell. A collective gasp went down the corridor as Harry's wand seemed to just appear in his hand. They saw Harry raise it to where it was pointing right between Draco's eyes.

"Right there, Draco. That's the point where they hit animals to put them down. What? No snappy comebacks about my godfather's death? Nothing about him being put down like a rabid dog? Why not Draco? Maybe because you realize to me you are nothing but an annoying, yappy dog. You are just a piece of shitte, Draco. You are just a turd that I keep stepping on in between fights with your precious Voldemort. I have always been able to just scrape you off

my boot and now I'm going to prove it." Harry said with a voice as cold as the snowy peaks around Hogwarts.

"Harry, stop!"

Harry didn't even blink. "What spell to use? Or do I even need a spell? Didn't Snivellus always tell us that tools bathed ritually in the right blood worked better? I could just put my wand through your eye right now and who knows what I could do then?"

"Harry, I'm warning you!"

"Of course why would I want to soil my wand with any of your blood? Bad enough my wand had troll bogeys on them. So I guess that leaves spells. Any preferences?" Harry said with a smile that had absolutely nothing to do with mirth.

"Harry, if you don't release Malfoy then I...I'll be f-forced to stop you!"

Harry eyes gave a quick glance down the corridor at Hermione who was holding her wand on him. He saw how unsteady it was. Her prefect badge made Harry briefly think of Percy. There was another git who would get what was coming to him. His eyes, the color of the death curse itself turned back to Draco.

"How about we send you off with an old favorite?" Harry said as he suddenly tossed Draco down the corridor towards Hermione who yelped and leaped backwards. As he had unconsciously done with Goyle, his wandless magic helped him toss the Slytherin with ease. Harry's wand came slashing down, "Serpensortia!"

Screams echoed down the corridor and Hermione gave out a startled gasp as a huge snake, the likes of which she had never seen erupted from Harry's wand. It landed on Crabbe and slithered off him towards Draco who was struggling to crawl around Hermione to get away from it. Harry's mouth moved and everyone heard the evil-sounding parsel-tongue commands he gave. Then, to everyone's surprise, Harry simply turned and went back into his compartment. The snake reared up and hissed at Draco and then lunged forward.

Harry sat down as Draco's screams could be heard mingling with Hermione's attempts to defend him from the snake. He looked out

the window at the countryside as it whizzed by. The other two people in the compartment were a picture of opposites. The first was a young Megan O'Donnell, a Muggleborn who Harry had helped earlier to get through to Platform 9¾ and was starting at Hogwarts this year. She was frankly terrified. The other was Luna Lovegood who looked as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened. She finished the article in the Quibbler she had been reading seemingly oblivious to the screams from the corridor.

After folding her paper and stowing it in her bag, Luna cocked her head to the side and looked over at brooding teen. "You know Harry, I'm not sure that was very nice to use a Tandalore Jungle snake. They are difficult to control since they are so resistant to magic. That and their bite is very, very painful...oh" Luna seemed to realize what she was saying and decided to drop it.

Harry turned to Luna, "I don't want to talk about any of that shitte, Luna. Tell me about Sweden. I'm glad you still got to go after our problems with the Ministry." While Harry was sort of interested in Luna's summer, he just wanted to get her talking. There was something different about her and he couldn't quite put his finger on it other than she wasn't wearing her ubiquitous butterbeer cork necklace or her radish earrings.

Luna gave a wide smile while O'Donnell gave a sort of gurgle at how the two were being so calm when it had sounded like Draco was being fed into a Muggle wood-chipper from the sound of his screams. Before Luna could launch into her summer exploits the compartment door was thrown open.

A wild-eyed Hermione looked down at the Boy-Who-Lived. Her robe was torn with some blood spattered upon it. Her prefect badge was askew and she was shaking. Her voice seemed to be two octaves higher than normal when she exclaimed, "Harry, what have you done?"

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HEADMASTER'S OFFICE, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 1st 1996 -
EVENING

"I will not be denied, Headmaster! I demand that Potter not only be expelled but given over to the Ministry so he can be thrown into

Azkaban!" Snape shouted. He was livid that Dumbledore seemed to be taking the attempted murder of one of his House so cavalierly.

"Please calm down, Severus, for while I am indeed old I am hardly deaf." Dumbledore's normal cheery voice was strained and to those who knew him might even say he was almost sounding a bit peevish.

"I will not calm down! Merlin's beard, have you seen what Potter did to Mr. Malfoy? Pomfrey says it will be days before he can leave the hospital wing!" Snape retorted. "You are acting like this is some schoolyard brawl when it was obviously a shameless attack!"

"An attack I must point out that your student provoked, Severus!" McGonagall interrupted. "I'm not condoning Mr. Potter's action but what do you expect to happen when he is cornered and provoked over the death of his godfather? We all know how dangerous teenagers with wands are. I've said time and time again a teacher should be present on the Express for just these types of incidents!"

A dry cough caught everyone's attention. Dumbledore was a bit surprised that it was Sinestra since she rarely spoke at faculty meetings, even emergency ones. She preferred the solitude of the Astronomy tower.

The pale woman spoke in a measured voice even if it was soft and a bit breathy. "Headmaster, I believe we have a bit more of a pressing problem and a bit of a mystery. With the death of Sirius Black, the head of House Black fell to young Draco. Of course since his father is still alive he is Lord Black in name only until he turns seventeen. However it is a more grievous situation since we have the head of one Ancient and Noble House attacking another. There will be political ramifications of this and I doubt we will be able to keep the Ministry out of it. With that...woman Umbridge freshly gone, I am distressed to think the Ministry could again interfere here in Hogwarts so soon afterwards."

"You said there was a mystery, Aurora. What did you mean?" Flitwick asked.

Sinestra frowned. "Mr. Potter should not have been able to attack Draco that way. Yes, I know of the ancient feud between their two Houses but this is a matter that relates to House Black. The only reason Draco Malfoy became Lord Black is that he comes from the

paternal Black line instead of a maternal one like Mr. Potter does. James Potter's grandmother's was Dorea Black, youngest sister to Pollux Black who Mr. Malfoy is descended from. If it not for that, his godfather's will that he be his rightful heir would have gone through."

"And this matters how?" Sprout interrupted hotly. "Frankly Headmaster I think we are wasting far too much time on this. Give him a year's worth of detentions or give him to the Ministry. I'm tired of how Mr. Potter and the whole Gryffindor versus Slytherin feud detracts from us doing our job which is to teach students!" Sprout said angrily.

Sinestra continued as if the head of Hufflepuff House hadn't spoken. "The mystery, Filius, is we all know that there are certain magics in place from ancient times to keep kin from fighting or murdering each other just so they can advance in their House. It still can be done but there are terrible punishments inflicted upon one's magic. Again, while House Potter and House Malfoy's feud dates back ages, the fact that Mr. Potter shares Black blood with Mr. Malfoy who is now Lord Malfoy-Black means that Mr. Potter should either have been unable to do what he did or since he did, he should be suffering some magical repercussions. That he is not raises the question of why?"

Dumbledore sighed, "Mystery or not, you are quite right that the Ministry will be involved. Even with Lucius off the Board of Governors and in Azkaban, the news of the attack has galvanized his minions. It has not helped that Minister Fudge has used his leverage with the Daily Prophet to pillory Mr. Potter all summer. However, I will not allow another repeat of last year. The attack happened on the Hogwarts Express and thus it falls under school jurisdiction."

Dumbledore looked over his half-moon glass and his gaze had none of the twinkle one normally saw. "Therefore, we will apply harsh corrective actions against Mr. Potter and we shall wait to respond to whatever Ministry response that is forthcoming."

Seeing Snape about to burst Dumbledore cut him off, "We have a volatile situation that must be controlled. The actions of the Inquisitional Squad, students mostly from your House, Severus, left a great deal of resentment among the student body. With the rumors

of Voldemort's return the matter has polarized the situation even more. I am sure all of you noticed now Mr. Potter's action affected the students during the Welcome Feast?"

All the teachers nodded at this. The energy in the Great Hall had been one of a supersaturated potion that only need a slight catalyst to spark it off into an explosion. Many in the hall were thankful that the Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff tables sat between those of Slytherin and Gryffindor or a brawl might have taken place. As it was, there had been a few scuffles as the students were going up to their common rooms.

Dumbledore let this sink in a bit before looking at his Potion Master. "Now Severus, I have been quite lenient over the years in regards to your behavior toward Mr. Potter. In this matter, let me make myself quite clear. His punishments will fit his actions. However, your student made a very bad judgment call in provoking Mr. Potter after the death of his godfather. While I deplore his actions, I must agree with Minerva that it could have been much worse. Mr. Malfoy is lucky Ms. Granger is such an accomplished witch. You will caution your Slytherins that any reprisals against Mr. Potter or his house will dealt with harshly. Minerva, this applies to Gryffindor as well. We must calm things down! So Severus you will abide by whatever punishments I and Minerva see fit to give Mr. Potter and you will not take any punitive actions against Mr. Potter in class. Is this clear?"

"No"

All eyes turned to Harry. They had all, quite frankly, forgotten he had been in the room the entire time. In fact he had barely said a word since he had been brought in by McGonagall.

"Excuse me, Harry?" Dumbledore said genially.

Harry's gaze was a mirror of the cold mask that he had had on the train when he was contemplating the best way to hurt Draco. "Headmaster, I said 'no' and I will say it again if you didn't hear it the first time. If you like I can also say, non, nein, nyet and no fucking way."

Most of the teachers looked at the teen with confusion. "No to what, my boy?" Dumbledore asked, ignoring the rest.

"I said 'no' to you punishing me. I said 'no' to Snape being civil to me because I'm not going to his class anymore. I said 'no' because I am going to walk out your door, find Hedwig and see if I can get transferred to Beauxbatons." Harry said with little inflection.

A collective shocked gasp came from most of the assembled teachers except for Snape whose sneer was firmly in place.

McGonagall recovered the quickest, "Mr. Potter, I know you have recently been through a traumatic event and..."

"You don't know shitte, Professor!" Harry interrupted. "None of you know anything about me. You have never taken the time to and you have no idea what is like to be me. To listen to you talk about me like I wasn't even here, it disgusts me! I said 'no' and I mean it. I am through with you all, I'm through with Hogwarts, I'm through with the fickle public and I'm through with Britain. I'm leaving."

"Now see here Potter..." Sprout began hotly only to be cut off again by the teen.

"No Professor, it is you who do not see. You all never saw the abuse I lived with since I was two and then every summer after coming here. Did any of you ever care enough to find out that I didn't even know my name wasn't 'freak' or 'boy' till I was five years old? How come Madame Pomfrey can tell when a kid is trying to skive off class but she couldn't see the bruises from the beatings I got or how I was practically starved all of my life?"

Harry gestured at Snape, "You turned a blind eye to this bastard who couldn't see past my father's face and so messed with me since my first days here. Or how last year he spent a good amount of time raping my mind under the pretext of teaching me occlumency. You don't see what I have in front of me in the form of Fate because our 'beloved' Headmaster thinks living with abusive relatives is a normal childhood. Then he waits five years before telling me about a prophecy which says it's me or Voldemort just so I can have a happy childhood. Any moron could see I lived in a abusive house so how was I to have a care-free childhood? So tell me Professor, what am I supposed to see?"

Dumbledore suddenly stood and towered over his desk, "Mr. Potter, this is not the time or the place for youthful rebellion and I would

remind you that many good wizard and witches have died to protect that secret you so blithely mention without my permission!

Harry gave a mirthless laugh, "You permission? I'm sorry, I didn't realize I needed to ask, 'by your leave' before talking about my so-called-life. Let's talk about how you kept me away from my godfather's funeral and reading of his will. Do you know what it is like to hear that my own godfather had wanted me to be his heir from fucking Malfoy? Do you think I wanted to learn some of the unpleasant truths about my life by having Voldemort try to possess me, a possession that wouldn't have happened if you had told me earlier about the prophecy?"

Harry looked around the office a bit while the adults were looking shocked. "I see you cleaned the place up since the last time I was here. Do I need to blow it up again before you listen to me? Well listen carefully now, I am through with all of this. I reject you and I reject that stupid prophecy. I am leaving. From what Professor Sinestra just said, the only reason that Draco isn't the emancipated Lord Malfoy-Black is because he's not an orphan like me. So that means I should be Lord Potter now. When was someone going to mention that to me?" Harry stared down the room, noting how at least Flitwick had the grace to look a bit embarrassed. McGonagall, on the other hand was giving him an uncharacteristically venomous look.

Harry continued his voice controlled and cold. "So in the light of me be eligible to take over House Potter, I'm going to Gringotts, I'm getting my family ring, my gold and I'm leaving this godforsaken island to Voldemort. Considering how no one here seems to want to actually do anything to stop him, he can have the lot of you. I refuse the role of savior to a bunch of back-stabbing bigots."

"I've had enough of this foolishness!" exclaimed Snape who had his wand out in one fluid motion. The stupefy spell he was about to cast died unspoken as he realized that Harry's wand was already pointed right between his eyes. None save Dumbledore and Flitwick who still had his champion dueling skills had even seen Harry move.

"Enough! Severus! Harry! Lower your wands! This is getting out of hand! Emotions are high and I will not have it! Minerva, take Mr. Potter to his quarters and we can deal with this tomorrow when we have all had a time to cool off." Dumbledore commanded.

Harry's wand didn't waiver nor did Snape's. Flitwick eyes narrowed as he saw the murderous intent flash between the two and a quick flick of his own wand pushed the two apart and broke the moment.

"Ah, thank you Filius. Now, as I said, Harry go with Minerva to your room and we will talk in the morning." Dumbledore said kindly.

Harry turned to Dumbledore. "No, I said I was leaving and I meant it."

McGonagall sighed, "Mr. Potter, you are not going anywhere and you are certainly not going to leave Hogwarts for Beauxbatons. Why the very idea!"

Harry locked eyes with the Headmaster. "So you are saying that you are not going to allow me to leave?"

Dumbledore looked a bit troubled, "Now Harry these are dangerous times and if you leave the school it is highly likely that the Ministry would have you in Azkaban before the night was over."

Harry gave a nasty smile, "But Headmaster, I'm a minor so I can't be sent to Azkaban. Now if I am indeed Lord Potter and thus should become an emancipated adult, I will cheerfully plead my case before the Wizengamot and take my chances on Azkaban. So again, unless I am a prisoner here, then I'm leaving."

Sprout had had enough, "Listen Potter, you are here to go to school and that's where you are going to stay."

Harry turned, "I refuse. I have decided that I no longer wish to learn magic here in Britain. If that isn't enough for you than you can expel me. You can all sod off for all I care. You and the rest of the magical world. I can fake my age well enough to get into the military as a cook or something. I'd rather be slinging hash in Bosnia than stay one minute more here."

Dumbledore's voice had lost all its customary warmth, "Harry, listen to me. You are not leaving Hogwarts and until we sort all of this out you will go to class and you will accept whatever disciplinary actions for your attack on Mr. Malfoy we sit fit to impose upon you."

Harry glared at the Headmaster for a moment and all the teachers were sure the teen would back down. In one quick action, Harry threw his wand down on the Headmasters desk. "I refuse," he said flatly and turned to McGonagall. "I don't think I'll be staying in Gryffindor tower again so will you kindly show me to my cell?"

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NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996

Harry wore a satisfied smile as he remembered the look on McGonagall's face that night. He had been so cross with her when he realized that she had tried to take him to Gryffindor tower. So he just stopped and wouldn't go any further. It had taken her awhile to realize that he hadn't been kidding when he said he was refusing to play by the Hogwarts rules anymore. It wasn't till he challenged her to see if her Imperious Curse would work any better than Barty Crouch Junior's had that she finally got a clue he wasn't going to budge!

Oh how she had raged! She had tried to act the stern deputy headmistress. She had tried to act the caring grandmother. He had been deaf to it all. It wasn't till he called for Dobby to bring him a blanket so he could sleep on one of the hall benches did she finally bring him to one of the rooms used to house married students or emancipated lords. Harry had snarked how appropriate the room was considering his actual status.

Harry missed that room. It had been far nicer than what he was in now. He had been rather unceremoniously put in his current room later the next day and had been stuck in the drafty room ever since. He wasn't sure but he felt that this had been an office for a teacher since it had a adjoining sleeping quarters with a bathroom to include a shower. Whoever had had this office must have been pretty low on the status ladder. Harry wondered if it had been Slughorn's old office since it matched his description of being cramped and drafty.

That it was just reinforced the idea that he was a prisoner and that was fine by Harry. He had meant it when he said he wasn't going to play the part which everyone else seemed to know about. Harry felt that he was trapped acting in a play that everyone else had the program for. Forcing them to keep him locked up was at least more

honest than the manipulative crap he had been fed ever since his First Year.

Harry got back to his self-imposed lesson plan. While he didn't have his wand, he wasn't about to give up on magic. He wouldn't put it past some of the Slytherins or even Snape himself to have a go at him. While he had been honest when he said he was willing to give it all up and be a Royal Army cook working at some IFOR base in Bosnia, he wasn't going to lower his guard a millimeter till he was safely away. Plus while it was an appealing idea to actually go through with his threat and chuck it all, Harry knew this really wasn't an option. Harry doubted magical players like Voldemort and Dumbledore would ever allow him any peace.

For right now, however, being locked up worked to Harry's advantage. He had time to read, meditate and practice his magic all the time getting three good meals a day he didn't have to make like he used to back at the Dursleys. As much as it was fun to shock everyone back in the Headmaster's office about leaving, Harry knew he wasn't quite ready to make a break for freedom. While he could have just kept his mouth shut that night and snuck out later, Harry knew that without money or much of a plan he would have been caught very quickly.

He didn't put it past Dumbledore to have some sort of tracking charms on him or his stuff. Harry knew he would if he was in the Headmaster's shoes. Even if he had made it out of Hogwarts, it was obvious that he would have had to go to Gringotts and between the aurors and the Order of the Phoenix; Harry didn't think he would have made it in to see the goblins before they nabbed him. Even if he just grabbed the Chunnel to France, the French Ministry would probably extradite him considering that Dumbledore was the Supreme Mugwump of the European Confederation of Magical States.

Of course he had other issues to deal with beyond his eventual break for freedom. Dumbledore had totally misread what had happened back at the fight at the Ministry in regards to Voldemort. He seemed to think Harry's pure soul had cast Voldemort out. What a laugh! In looking back now he realized that Snake Face had been lucky to get away at all. If Harry had known what he knew now, Voldemort wouldn't have been so lucky.

In the relative peace of Privet Drive, Harry had been able to think about a lot of things. Vernon and Petunia seemed to sense that he wasn't going to take any shit from them and so just avoided him. Harry had done chores like cooking and gardening without being asked if only for the routine of it. Hacking at nine months of weeds and making omelets in the morning helped get him up and moving. Otherwise it would have been easy to just stay in his room and think. Harry had done that for the first day or two before he realized that it would be very easy for him to actually starve to death by being so wrapped up in processing what was in his head. He had called Dobby and been pleased that the little elf had been happy to bring him food and remind him to shower or go out and do his planned chores.

If Harry had to write out his thoughts he could have overwritten an entire Britannica set. So many things came and went with hardly any time for him to really process them. His grief over Sirius, his worry about his friends and the new rage against the Headmaster made a difficult task that much harder. Plus where would anyone learn how to deal with having another person's life and soul being merged with yours?

Harry laughed at this and remembered the other reason he didn't like to talk to himself or laugh; of late his laugh often sounded like Riddle from the diary. That was problem; it probably was a bit of Riddle's laugh because Harry was now more Tom Riddle than Voldemort was.

Harry glanced at the mirror over his dresser. He couldn't help it. He kept expecting to see his Riddle's face except his own. It had already happened twice although Harry was pretty confident that it had been unintentional on his part. His limited metamorphagus skills were just another new thing after his bound magic was released when Voldemort tried to possess him.

After thinking about it since June, Harry was relatively sure he knew what was going on. First, at some point for reasons unknown Dumbledore had bound his magic. He knew young children sometimes had this done to keep them from exposing their magic to Muggles. However from what he knew, you never kept someone's magic bound during their school years. This was doubly important since puberty and sexual hormone increases needed to be synched with the maturing magical core of the teen.

Harry wondered if his very flat interest in girls had been because of his magic not synching with his body. He knew there had been plenty of rumors floating around that he was gay considering how many girls there were who would bend over backwards to shag the Boy-Who-Lived if he just asked. To guys like Seamus (and Ron too, Harry thought guiltily) that Harry never took any of the gals up on that was practically proof he was a poof.

Second Harry knew that his curse scar was more than he had been told if even the Old Man had even known. It was a horcrux...or at least it had been. When Voldemort had tried to possess him, he had accidentally unbound his magic and in the process of throwing Voldemort out of his mind and soul, Harry had made a startling discovery: he had two pieces of Voldemort's soul in him already. Now he had a good chunk of Voldemort's recent memories as well as more and more of his memories from when he was just Tom Riddle becoming clearer in his head all of the time.

Harry knew it was good that he had these memories because it brought him some knowledge of legimens and occlumency he needed to help sort these new memories as well as wall them off so not to drown in Riddle's life. Considering how he had accidentally seen some of Snape's memories during his so called occlumency lesson, Harry wasn't surprised he ended up with a copy of so much of Voldemort's. They had been sort of merged for a bit during their mental battle.

How all this came to pass Harry wasn't sure but it seemed from what he could tell of Voldemort's memories and what he found in his head that Riddle had made a critical mistake when making his first horcrux, the diary. For some reason he seemed to think that every horcrux he made would have an equal amount of his soul.

Harry now knew Voldemort had planned to make four with his remaining soul fragment making the magical number five. However, instead of four pieces with something like 20% of his soul in each place the reality was far different. The first horcrux had contained half of Riddle's soul at the time. Worse (for Voldemort) was he managed to force much of his 'humanity' into that horcrux because he felt emotions like love made one weak.

So when Voldemort made his next horcrux, the school award for Harry knew he got for framing Hagrid, he put in half of what he had left. After the next horcrux, a locket from his mother, he had put in half again. Thus when Voldemort tried to make his last horcrux, the piece that got embedded into Harry had been a mere sliver of his original soul. The fact that Voldemort had only around 6.5% of his original soul left seemed to explain why he had looked so distorted before he died and why he looked barely human now.

What had surprised Harry was that when a horcrux was destroyed, the soul fragment would bind with another fragment of the same soul if close enough. Thus Harry had sucked up the half of Riddle's soul when he destroyed the diary. Thus Harry had more of Voldemort's soul than he did. Therefore the pull of what was left of Voldemort's soul was drawn to what was already in Harry. His supposed purity of soul had nothing to do with anything! However in throwing Voldemort out of his mind, he had inadvertently leached the soul fragment out of the curse scar and merged it with the Riddle half. That new soul piece was now linked to Harry's own soul.

This had led to the third discovery. First, he found that being linked to Voldemort had nothing to do with being a Parselmouth. Why Dumbledore had never seen fit to tell him it was a trait found occasionally in many of the older families and in countries like India it was seen as a good thing Harry would never know. He was also a bit brassed off at Parvati; she could have mentioned it to him as well. He didn't get to see Padma as often so she at least had an excuse.

With his magic unbound, Harry finally found out why his hair always grew back after being cut: he was a metamorphagus. He wasn't like Tonks, though. Harry found he could only change the length and color of his hair, make very minor changes to his face (hardly noticeable) and change his eye color. However twice he had accidentally changed into a complete copy of Riddle. Both times Harry had been going through Riddle's memories when he had changed. As yet he never had done it while sleeping. Harry wasn't sure why he could become a copy of Riddle when he couldn't change into anyone else but he suspected it was because of the soul fragment.

So while the rest of the school watched Gryffindor playing Slytherin, Harry was again sifting through the Dark Lord's memories while practicing a form of magic that most people Harry knew felt was

mostly impossible. Again Harry marvel that it could only happen to him.

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A/N: I posted this story after long, hard thoughts because it isn't finished. I really loath with every fiber of my being reading a 20+ chapter story only to find that not only is it not finished but the last update was back in something like 2005. So, be warned that I will be going back and updating the chapters. If you are reading this, this is already the second update to this chapter alone. If I do add something substantial like a paragraph or two (like I did with this update to chapter one) I will point it out in the next author's notes in the next chapter I post.

Acknowledgements: Big shout out to Radaslab and Jbern for their influence of how I see the fanon Harry Potter. My whole concepts of the use of sexual release came from Radaslab's story The Harem War of which I modified to suit my stories. The Harem War rocks...but I caution you since it isn't finished you'll set yourself up for crying into your beer if you start reading it. You'll be like me, wishing you could win the lottery so you can pay Radaslab to have the time to write full time. I encourage romantic lovers (especially Harmony lovers) to read Radaslab's Breakfast in NYC. I hope my magical duels are considered to be ¼ as good as the ones Jbern has written in such works such as Bungle in the Jungle/Turn Me Loose and Lies I've Lived.

Quidditch Match: Yes by the day to day timeline on the HP Lexicon, the first Quidditch game of the season isn't till November, but I see them wanting to play early before the weather gets bad. Plus let's get real since it is almost unheard of that First Years are on the team, one would expect with floo that the teams would meet and practice prior to the start of term just like high school football teams do here in America. Why JKR seems to think Magicals would want to play (and watch) games outside in the dead of winter IN SCOTLAND is beyond me, warming charms be damned! Hmm, maybe in America they play Quidditch up till the Christmas break and then play Quadpot later when weather gets nicer.

Sports at Hogwarts: It does beg the question, what would the magical equivalent of polo be? The mind boggles at the Hogwarts Thestrals Polo team! Or a professional version like the Holyhead

Harpies where the women players are all virgins and play on unicorns. I also wonder why there are no other physical games at Hogwarts since you can only have seven players in Quidditch. Even if each position has a reserve player it means only 46 kids out of the entire school get to play. Also, considering how mad for football Europeans are, I would think there would be enough Muggleborn and Muggle raised who would want to play it. Considering how few get to play Quidditch, you'd think they'd jump at playing football. I have always felt that JKR's depiction of magical teens was a bit off. "Weird" or not, fun is fun and I think if you plunked your average teen wizard in front of a Playstation it wouldn't be long before he was just as addicted as a Muggleborn. So unless there is a serious, serious taboo against all things Muggle, I can't see not having football at Hogwarts. Of course it might be the Magicals are just too damn lazy to want to run around after a ball. Heavens! Actually having to run? How common! (/sarcasm)

Update the First: DriftWood1965 made some interesting comments regarding the lengths someone like Oliver Wood might have to go to in regards to the Hogwarts Thestrals Polo team! This made me wonder if the Beauxbatons team would have those flying, whiskey drinking horses while Durmstrang might have something nastier like hippogriffs. That they all fly could make the magical version of polo a more three dimensional sport which sort of boggles the mind.

IFOR: Back during the whole Balkans crisis back in the mid-90's, NATO had a string of missions to help keep the peace. The first was IFOR (International FORce) which led to the later SFOR (Stabilization FORce) in December of 1996 which in turn became KFOR (Kosovo FORce) in 1999. I missed going in with the first American troops back in 1995 due to being transferred out of Germany to Fort Hood, TX right as the mission was starting. If anyone remembers some CNN footage of the time when a river flooded out a camp of Americans, I knew a lot of people being interviewed about it. That almost was me! Alas, the Army waiting till I was 40 before deploying me into a combat zone. =/

Supreme Mugwump of what? I never liked the idea that out of the entire world Dumbledore was head of what looked like the magical United Nations. Considering how backwards magical Britain seemed, this just didn't seem right. So I decided to break it down a step. The European Confederation of Magical States (the ECWS) under a Supreme Mugwump is a regional sub-section of the larger

International Confederation of Wizards which is headed up by the Absolute Mugwump. This makes more sense to me since it allows Dumbledore to control more of the stuff in relation to Europe but not the world. In my fics I tend to have the rest of the world mostly ignore the ECWS as a bunch of backward thugs. Pretty much as the empires of the Victorian Age fell apart, magical Europe withdrew into itself and most of the magical world said, "Good riddance!" I see a lot of the attitudes of the Pureblood Supremacists being similar to people who just couldn't wrap their heads around the fact that the 'Sun never sets on the British Empire' was no more. Better to hang onto the memories of old and lost glories than actually go out and learn about the changes in the Muggle world and actually create something new. (Perish the thought!)

CHAPTER TWO – A SURPRISE VISIT

NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 26th 1996 – MID-MORNING

Harry had a problem.

Certainly he had many problems considering he was locked away in a tower at a magical school in Scotland. Then there was the manic Dark Lord and his fanatic minions which where after his blood; they easily constituted a problem. That he was seemingly forgotten by his previous friends was a problem but one he had come to grips with. He had lived too much of his life without friends to let it really tear him up.

No, his problem was that he was very, very horny.

Now to most sixteen year old boys, this would be a normal thing. Most sixteen year old boys would try to deal with the problem by chatting up girls and trying to get in their knickers. That most sixteen year old girls generally didn't allow that meant that most normal boys snagged whatever porn their fathers or older brothers hid poorly and then rubbed one out.

Harry, however, was not a normal sixteen year old boy.

This had been evident to him the first time he realized that somehow he had disappeared the glass at the zoo and talked to the boa. However Harry had learned in time that there where witches and wizards and they too could do such things. However none of them had most of the soul of another magical person linked to their soul. Especially not a soul filled with all the normal urges that Tom Riddle had had when he was in school.

What compounded Harry's problem was both he and Riddle had issues with the 'easy' way out of their horniness. In Harry's case, his relatives had always taken him to church. There, every Sunday, Harry had been told over and over about sin and how masturbation especially was one of the most selfish and venal of sins. The Catholic priest always seemed to be talking right at him during Sunday school when talking about spilling one's seed. One of the few times his cousin Dudley had ever been punished in front of Harry was when Aunt Petunia had caught him wanking off to a

lingerie catalog. Harry had gotten a nasty beating as well for good measure to ensure he learned the same message according to his aunt.

In Riddle's case (since his feelings were sort of Harry's now) was the sense that feelings of lust, love or anything like closeness was a weakness. Tom had had to be tough and cold to survive his time at the orphanage. Surprisingly he never used his good looks to bed witches and thus use them for his own ends. When he made his first horcrux, almost all of those hated desires had been locked into the diary to be forgotten. His soul mutilation marred his once handsome features so only someone as twisted as Bellatrix LeStrange would even consider sexual ideas about him.

Normally controlling one's 'baser' instincts could be done through many things like meditation, self-flagellation or just working oneself into physical exhaustion. Again, Harry was not normal. His magical core had been bound and he had gone through puberty that way. With the bindings on his magic undone when Voldemort tried to possess him, he now had magic roaring through him that was energizing his normal, hormonal feelings.

Worse, this was compounded by being linked to the part of Riddle's soul where he had put all of those same urges and desires. So while Harry was making great strides integrating what Voldemort had inadvertently left him, knowledge of magic accumulated through years, Harry was in desperate need of a good, long, satisfying orgasm. Scratch that, he need a lot of them.

Harry had plenty of opportunity for fucking at Hogwarts but never had taken advantage of it. He had always been surrounded by Boy-Who-Lived groupies who would have loved for Harry to bed them. If he was honest with himself Harry knew he could have had Colin Creevey polishing his knob most nights if he had wanted it. Yet he had always been embarrassed by the attention and faintly disgusted by it. He saw now that with his magic bound, his emotional level was mostly kept at the 'girls are icky!' level and it wasn't till the last two years when his normal hormonal growth had finally broken through enough for him to at least notice girls like Cho.

The only sexual contact he had was through Quidditch of all things. Without either exhausting one's core from time to time (which was hard for young witches and wizards to do with the spells they knew)

a young teen's magic couldn't synch with their growing body. This would cause mood swings (never a good thing with teens with wands) as well as more and more bouts of accidental magic. There were also physical signs of this magical 'back-up' that could be seen if one knew what to look for.

Oliver Wood had noticed it in Harry early in his Third Year when his game was off during practice. So to get his star seeker back on track, he had Katie Bell (a Muggleborn herself) take Harry "in hand" to get him squared away. She had spent most of that season trying to get him to jack off by himself. She had done things like showing off her tits or even playing with herself to try to excite him. Harry certainly had been excited; Katie was impressed that for all his slimness, his cock was of a goodly size and thickness. However Katie mostly ended up having to jerk him off herself. By the end of the season she had, at least, gotten him to jerk himself off onto her tits. Harry loved her tits. In fact, Harry found he loved tits in general. After their final win of that season, she had rewarded him with a fantastic blow-job and had hinted that they might go farther the next year.

Harry was sure he was cursed because Fate intervened with the Tri-Wizard Tournament and about the only sexual gratification was being around Fleur Delacour and having dirty thoughts about her. Seeing her in a bathing suit during the Second Task was the highlight of the year for him sexually. There had been times when Hermione had asked Harry if there was anything she could do for him when he had been tempted to ask if he could rub one out onto her breasts. He knew, however, the chance of Hermione allowing that was right up there with Snape breaking down and apologizing for being a greasy-haired git.

His fifth year had a return of Quidditch fun with Katie but after a year and all the stress of those times had put a dampener on things. Not that Katie thought he was a nutter like the rest of school, but she seemed a bit exasperated with him because he was still repressed. Harry did feel bad retroactively that he couldn't take her up with what she had been offering at the time. If he had been 'normal' back then they probably would have been shagging before and after games. She had certainly liked sucking him off. She had said he 'felt' good and tasted better to boot. From Riddle's memories he knew she had probably been responding to his magical aura, even bound as it was. She had taught him a few things about pleasing her as well. Of

course fickle Fate intervened again and he was booted off the Quidditch team just as things were getting more intense.

Now, however, it was how witches responded to strong magical auras that intrigued Harry. While Riddle hadn't felt the desire to use it, Harry wondered how things were going to be once his imprisonment ended. Fame had drawn a lot of girls to him. If he could finally become Lord Potter, then he'd have wealth too; always a good lure for many witches. Yet now his own magic was unbound and it had been augmented by Riddle's soul. If witches were subtly attracted to a strong wizard's aura, how would they react to his?

Harry was itching to try and find out. He had already found some techniques Voldemort had learned to focus his aura for certain types of magical spell work. He, however, had never considered using it to tune his aura to act on a witch's own aura. Harry had been practicing it and he thought it would work but with no one to actually test it on he really couldn't be sure.

Until he could, however, Harry contented himself to reading, going through all the interesting things Riddle had picked up in his years as well as working on his wandless magic. Since it took a lot of power, Harry could at least really work his magical core which took the edge off his seemingly perpetual horniness. He knew Dobby was ecstatic that he constantly got to change Harry's soiled bed linens every morning. It was a good thing he wasn't back in Gryffindor tower; he knew the guys would never let him live down him cumming on his sheets in his sleep like an ickle First Year.

"Hello Harry Potter" a voice behind him said.

Harry whirled and without much conscious thought the book about the magical history of crups went flying towards the sound. Harry was dropping into a defensive crouch when he realized the voice belonged to Luna Lovegood. She was floating outside his window on his Firebolt of all things. He got a glimpse of the book he had tossed as it dropped from sight. Luckily it had missed.

Luna glanced over her shoulder and then back to him, "Wow, Harry, I think you chucked that into the lake! I hope that wasn't one of Madame Pince's library books."

"Sorry Luna," Harry said sheepishly. "I really wasn't expecting visitors...especially ones outside my window!"

Harry got up and offered Luna his hand to help her into through the small window. He then gleefully took his Firebolt. It felt like Christmas because visions of freedom were suddenly dancing in his head. While he eventually was going to make a break for freedom, Harry had still been wondering exactly how to make it happen. Since he had yet to find in any of Riddle's memories about how to apparate, Harry worried he was still dependent on the floo network to put distance between him and Hogwarts. He thought his Firebolt was still locked up where Umbridge had put it last term. With it, he could go pretty much anywhere with the right planning when the time was right.

Harry took his broom and stashed it in the closet and hid it under some clothes. Knowing his luck, the Headmaster would probably pick tomorrow morning for some sort of surprise inspection. He turned to find Luna sitting on his bed, bouncing a bit and wearing a frown.

"My goodness Harry, this bed is dreadful! Do you have dead nargles hidden under the mattress?" Luna asked.

Harry laughed. "No, I think this was the office teachers got stuck with if they pissed off the Headmaster. I'm sure the Old Man is being his subtle self in trying to show his displeasure with my 'youthful rebellion' as he called it."

Luna rolled her eyes, surprising Harry. Luna seemed a bit different from her 'normal' loony self. Not that Harry was complaining. He was very aware that she was still a pretty girl who was on his bed. A part of Harry was happy she was here and he was eager to hear what had been going on in the school while he had been locked up. Another more primal part was just marking time before he shagged her senseless.

"'Youthful rebellion', is that what you've been doing? Here we had been told you were being treated for the after-effects of being possessed by Voldemort. Or at least that is what the Headmaster says. It is the reason you supposedly attacked Draco like you ever needed an excuse for that. None of the students believes him. The rumors are much more exciting." Luna said.

"Let me guess, most don't believe Voldemort is back. Wait; don't tell me, the Ministry and the Daily Prophet still haven't told anyone about the fight at the Ministry? All those rumors of Voldemort's return are just the ravings of a deranged teen." Harry asked.

"More that you are a deranged teen that left Hogwarts to gather his own group of dark underlings. Oh yes, you're practically the Boy-Who-Fell-From-Grace." Luna said. "Of course that's just the main rumor. Depending on what House you are in, the favored story changes. My favorite is that you are actually a minion of the Old Ones and are preparing for their return, oh speaker to snakes."

"Ia ia Cthulhu fhtagn?" Harry asked with a grin. "Who started that one?" The twinkle in Luna's eyes answered the question for him. "I didn't realize you read Muggle stories, Luna."

"I read a lot during the summer. There nothing else to really do and I find most magical fiction to be dreadful." Luna said.

"Oh? I would have thought your time in Sweden would be interesting." Harry said.

Luna's whole demeanor seemed to melt away leaving a very different girl. "I've never really been to Sweden, Harry. All the times I've visited had nothing to do with trying to find those silly animals Daddy is forced to write about."

Harry's newly acquired sense of his aura could easily read the menace suddenly inherent in Luna's own aura. Without a wand, Harry found he was rather disquieted by the feeling. He felt a bit naked and defenseless. This was certainly not the same wide-eyed girl who vexed Hermione in D.A. classes!

"So what where you really doing in Sweden?" Harry asked carefully.

"I was getting fucked by so-called business partners of my father. There is a whole group of them there. Daddy's been pimping me out since I was ten." Luna said in a flat emotionless voice.

Harry just looked at her. She glared back as if daring him to contradict her or refute her statement. Harry just searched her eyes and let his own aura interact with hers. She wasn't lying he found.

"Alright, since I thought we had enough of a relationship during our D.A. time that you might have asked me for help, I think it is safe to say that you only recently remembered all of this? Harry asked. Due to Voldemort's memories, he knew full well what memory charms and obliations could do.

Luna nodded, "I do now. It all started at the fight at the Ministry..."

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DEPARTMENT OF MYSTERIES, LONDON, JUNE 4th 1996

Luna hummed happily to herself as she tried to orient herself. Regardless of the fact she was in mortal danger, she was rather enjoying herself. So often she went through life like she was wearing dirty glasses; everything seemed cloudy and confusing. She had learned to treasure times when her mind cleared and she could think easier. These times had usually been very rare but lately her head was clearer while she was with Harry at his D.A. meetings.

Luna bit her lip as she looked at the room she found herself in. It was filled with bookshelves and ancient tomes. From somewhere she could hear Ronald screaming but she couldn't quite seem to find a way from where she was to there. She had wished she hadn't been separated from the rest but it was that or take a curse to the chest. She hadn't wanted that. They weren't very large but Luna liked her breasts. Or at least her big, pointy nipples. Padma and Su Li certainly seemed to like them too.

Luna wanted to quickly reunite with the rest of the group, Harry especially. Ever since she first saw him at the Gryffindor table her first night at Hogwarts she had felt some sort of kinship with him. She needed to find him. There was something he wanted her to help her with...if she could only remember!

"Well aren't you a pretty little poppet. Have you lost your way, love?" a cold voice sneered from one of the hallways to her left. She quickly turned and cast the bat-bogey hex that Ginny had taught her. The spell missed the Death Eater who was casting right back at her. Luna ducked behind a desk as the wall behind her shattered with the spell's impact.

"Now that was right impolite of you, love! Kids these days!" the Death Eater laughed as he continued cast spells to which Luna found herself hard pressed to do nothing by dodge or cast defensive spells. Finally once cutter nearly took her head off. It nicked her shoulder and cut off her butterbeer cork necklace which fell to the floor. With a cry, she dropped to the floor like a puppet with its strings cut as her mind seemed to suddenly be on fire.

Luna's mind, which had been feeling quite clear ever since the fight started, seemed to focus into laser-like sharpness. Unbidden memories started to surface, horrible, horrible memories. It was all she could do not to moan and vomit as the parade of images passed by her mind's eye.

Nestor Jugson waited for Luna to try and make a break from behind the huge oak desk. He was enjoying playing with the young girl. It had been a long time since he had been able to do so. He had done some Muggle hunting on the side but it wasn't the same since they really couldn't fight back. It was only fighting another magic-user that really got the blood pumping. Nestor leered to himself since he always enjoyed satisfying his other urges after a fight. His cock stiffened at that thought.

"Come out pet, time for old Jugson to give you what's coming to you!" the Death Eater called out as he banished the desk away to reveal the young girl gasping on the floor. Nestor frowned a bit at this. He had hoped for a bit more of a fight. Yet he figured that he really couldn't expect a wee slip of a girl to put up much of a fight in the face of one such as him. No matter, if he couldn't get a fight, he could still satisfy other urges. He carefully walked over and used his foot to toe the girls' wand away from her hands. She did nothing but continue to gasp for breath as if she had been running for miles.

"Alright my lovely, let's see what you have under that dress of your," Jugson said as he grabbed her by the shoulder and flipped her over on to her back. The spell to banish her knickers out from under her skirt was already on his tongue when the girl exploded into action. Her foot suddenly lashed out and kicked him hard right in the crotch as her hand reached out; her wand suddenly jumping into it from across the floor. A slash of the wand and Jugson was thrown across the room.

The Death Eater groaned in pain as books from the shelf he had been thrown into rained down on him. Through the pain he looked up to see the girl bearing down on him. As hard as a man he was, Jugson was amazed and frightened by the hellish look in the girl's eyes as she advanced on him.

"You are not allowed to touch me! Do you hear me?" Luna screamed as she slashed her wand to and fro. The fallen Death Eater gave a strangled cry as the cutting spells lopped off both of his hands at the wrist. The smell of burnt flesh rose from the burning stumps.

"I know what filthy things you wanted to do! You'll never rape again!" and with that Luna's wand slashed again, easily castrating Jugson who howled in agony.

"I know what you see when you look at me! You are all alike with your dirty, filthy eyes. **YOU AREN'T ALLOWED TO LOOK AT ME!**" Luna roared as she conjured a frothing cup of a nasty looking liquid. She threw it into Jugson's face where it quickly began to burn his flesh. Luna looked down at the wreck of a man, "You never imagined a 'pretty little poppet' could know such spells, did you Death Eater? Just little Looney Luna, daughter to bitter old Lovegood is that what you thought, right?" Luna laughed a strangled, bitter laugh as Jugson continued to scream in agony as his flesh melted. "Oh if you only knew what deprave acts and dark knowledge can be found at the Lovegood house!"

Luna leaned down to whisper into Jugson's one intact ear which the acid had missed, "There is nothing worse than destroying little girls' dreams and innocence. There is no mercy for rapists." With that she backed away and centered her magical core, her magical energy rising, "Congrego Glacies!"

Nestor Jugson was a seasoned veteran from the first war he fought under Voldemort. He had once failed in a mission and had gladly suffered the Crucio cast by his master. Yet that pain was nothing like what he felt now. It started at his feet and rapidly rose from there. Nestor had not thought he could scream louder or more in fear until he realized that the very water in his body was freezing! The last seconds of his life were filled with a pain he had never known could even exist.

Luna watched as the fallen Death Eater's body froze and buckled as the ice expanded it. A muttered curse blew it into pieces. After a moment's thought, another swish of her wand brought the bookshelf down upon what was left of the body. She then walked over to where her butterbeer necklace lay on the floor. Luna stared at it with venomous hatred in her eyes for awhile before her wand came up and destroyed the necklace with fire.

Luna raised her head, listening to the sounds of the fight in the distance. "Now it is time to burn all such chains!" she said grimly. With a toss of her hair, she used her wand to close the cut on her shoulder which had continued to bleed throughout the fight.

"Cuspis Viator!" Luna cast and headed off in the direction the spell indicated. She had to find Harry Potter. Everything depended on it.

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NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996

Harry watched as Luna struggled with her breathing. He knew it must have been hard to talk about something so personal, so visceral. However, her story brought up more questions than it answered.

"So, I guess now the question I'm expected to ask is why? I wouldn't think pimping out one's adolescent daughter was normal." Harry finally asked.

Luna gave a cold, lifeless laugh, "Oh it happens more than you think, Harry. It used to happen all the time back in old Queen Victoria's time out among the Muggles. We Magicals live like that time never ended. For the right price you can go to Knockturn Alley and get a boy for the night, fuck a centaur filly or have a house elves fulfill what ever deviant desire you might have. Got enough gold and you can have your way with a Veela bound to magic compelling her to satisfy what sick fantasies you have. Bugging a little girl? Please, for the seamier side of our culture, what happened to me was tame."

Harry was stunned by this. Magical Britain had always seemed rather repressed to him. Sure when kids where having to synch their magic there was a lot of 'accepted' sexual play, even among the same gender. However he had gotten the sense that the minute you

got out of school you were expected to get married, have a family and that was that. From what he had seen, especially at the Weasleys, things were all very proper with good Victorian family values or some shitte like that.

Luna seemed to read his thoughts. "You thought it was all Mummy, Daddy, two point five kids and the family kneazle, right? If only! Harry, most men with some excess gold have a mistress on the side. It's all hypocrisy, all of it!" She said fiercely.

Harry sat down on the bed next to her and took her hand. He couldn't help but notice how good she smell and her scent again ignited the war between his two selves. However throwing her down and shagging her did seem rather repellent even as his own cock strained against his underwear.

"Luna, be that as it may, I just want to know how did this happen? Why you? How could your dad do this to you?" Harry asked gently.

Luna visibly calmed herself down. "Harry, I'll say it again; it is all hypocrisy. It all comes back to my father and his relationship with my grandfather. My uncle Neoptolemus was a powerful wizard. He was a fighter and he had vitality about him that people responded to. My father, on the other hand, was more of a thinker. He can see links that other people miss and he grasps subtleties lost to most people. To my grandfather, however, Daddy was less then the dust under my uncle's feet. So Daddy grew up very bitter."

"No matter how well he did at school, no matter how many awards he won or critical acclaim he gathered, my grandfather doted on his oldest son. For good reason as Uncle Neoptolemus was a renowned fighter against Voldemort. His team of aurors never failed. One of the reasons was unlike my grandfather; Neoptolemus respected my father's intellect and used him to predict the best times to strike. Yet no matter how much credit he would give his younger brother, the public always seemed to focus on him being the hero of the day. Again no matter what my father did, he never got the recognition he desired."

"Then the war ended. Voldemort was gone and my uncle was dead, killed in an ambush. My Uncle and his team went down fighting and they took out many of the remaining Death Eaters with them. Plus my grandparents were also dead in a previous strike where the

Death Eaters had hoped to catch Daddy and my uncle during a visit but they managed to escape. So now Daddy was head of House Lovegood."

Luna paused and looked at Harry to gauge how he was talking it. Seeing him calmly waiting for her to continue, she pressed on. "House Lovegood use to be very rich. Yet when my father took over he found our House to be practically penniless. My uncle had either willingly or through trickery funded much of Dumbledore's Order of the Phoenix. So right at a time when my father expected to come into some wealth which would allow him to fund research projects he had dreamed about since Hogwarts, Daddy found the Goblins calling with past due debts. How he raged that magical Britain sat and cowered on the sidelines and hadn't even spent a galleon on their own defense."

"Into this came House Ollivander to supposedly save the day." Luna said in a tone that would have made Snape proud. "They offered my father a hefty bride price if he would marry my mother, Selene Ollivander. Rumors had her a bit 'off' but Daddy knew she was brilliant. She had received many awards at Beauxbatons where she had gone to school to get her NEWTs. Knowing he needed an heir and needing the money, he took House Ollivander's galleons and my mother as his wife."

"Daddy did his duty and Mum did hers and I was born soon afterwards. Unfortunately Daddy found out why House Ollivander had been willing to spend so much wealth to get Mum married," Luna said sadly.

"She was a lesbian, wasn't she?" It's why she went to Beauxbatons for her last two years. They were trying to cover up the fact, right? Harry guessed.

Luna looked surprised but pleased. "Right in one, Harry! Yes, my mum loved women and refused to give them up. You must know Harry, that with so many wizards screwing around on the side, it is an open secret that often time witches have 'girl's night out' where some same-sex play goes on, but as long as it is just that, society as a whole looks the other way."

"At least they do for the women. I don't think it is the same for wizards," Harry said thinking of all the crap Colin got for being so swishy.

"Yes, but much of that is because of the pressure for men to have an heir and continue their House line. Regardless, having a long term relationship with another adult woman is considered very bad in our culture. Even actively seeking out new sexual relationships among other adult women is frowned on. If adult witches have girl-sex it is almost always with women they had girl-sex with back at school. However Daddy was trapped. He needed Mum to bear him a son and he couldn't bear the shame of a divorce." Luna said.

Luna suddenly sat back onto the bed and crossed her arms over her chest as if she was laid out in a coffin. Harry decided to lie next to her on his side. Seeing how pensive she was, he stroked her long hair hoping it would calm her down enough for her to continue.

"Daddy still had money problems. He had started the Quibbler as a scholarly magazine but it rapidly became a tabloid simply because that is what sold and we needed the money. This ate at him and I've heard how he would rage at the stupidity of the average witch and wizard. This bitterness would be compounded when he contracted Dragonpox while trying to get investors for the Quibbler while in Finland. Funny how Daddy had worked as a volunteer treating victims of the Dragonpox epidemic of 1978 without any problems. The strain then had been terribly virulent and so many died on top of the war with Voldemort that was just starting to really heat up. It was this epidemic that killed your paternal grandparents, Harry. So even when many healers were afraid to treat the sick, Daddy waded in to show his father how much of a man he truly was, not that grandpa noticed. So ironic that after all that he would catch it in a pub in Helsinki" Luna said a bit woodenly.

"I can see why he'd be bitter but at least he didn't die? Most people don't survive it from what I've heard. I'd think being alive would be a blessing." Harry said.

"Yes he did survive it but he found out he was sterile. So I was the only child he would ever have. There was no chance now of a son to carry on the House name. Plus I think Daddy wanted a son to treat in a way he wished his own father had done to him. So it was in this stew of bitterness, feeling of failure and disgust at the world in

general that Daddy came home one night to find Mum in bed with the wife of the head of the DMLE." Luna said.

Harry blanched at this. He couldn't see any wizard that high up the Ministry food chain taking it well his wife was in bed with a suspected lesbian or being happy with the husband of that woman. "I'm guessing your dad took it...poorly."

Luna nodded sadly. "He killed her the moment the other women floo'ed out. House Ollivander helped to create the 'spell-crafting accident' and it was all hushed up. This set the stage for my father to later take his rage and bitterness out on me."

Harry's eyes narrowed, "Did he molest you?"

Luna closed her eyes. Between her pale skin and her pose, she might as well been a corpse laid out for viewing at a wake. "No, but he certainly was mentally abusive. When I got a bit older, he decided I needed to be broken of any hint that I might follow in my mother's lesbian footsteps. It was all just a hypocritical lie. Daddy just needed the money and his 'investors' were happy to pay to indulge their sick, sexual fantasies. Daddy always made a point to come in after I had been taken and told me how this was for my own good."

Harry shook his head. "You know Luna, if I had a hundred galleons for every time I had been told things were being done for my own good, you and I could buy a yacht and sail around the world till we died of old age," he said sadly.

Luna opened her eyes and rolled over towards Harry. Their faces were close. Harry had to fight down the urge to take her. He wanted to so badly but he had to be there for her. She had been there for him after Sirius had died; he owed her.

"Yes, Harry I know. Even when I was under charmed objects that muddled my mind and obliviations kept me from remembering things that no girl should have to know, I always knew you and I were kindred spirits."

"Did you Dad obliviate you every time? No wonder you ended up loony!" Harry said appalled at the thought. Considering the symptoms Mr. Roberts had shown to multiple obliviations back at

the World Cup, Harry was surprised Luna was capable of thinking at all if she had constantly been obliviated.

Luna traced a finger down Harry's cheek oblivious to what affect it was having on Harry. "No, Daddy did a special obliviation where when he lifted it, I would remember everything until he cast the spell again. Originally he had just obliviated me but even my bastard of a father couldn't deal with his daughter going through the trauma of being betrayed by her own father and given to smelly old wizards as their plaything over and over again."

Harry reached out and took Luna's hand away from his cheek. He needed to get some control because he was going to lose it. It was disgusting to think here she was talking about being raped in the worst possible way and all he could do was barely contain his raging desire to fuck her himself.

"Luna, stop that," Harry said gently. He didn't want to hurt her feelings.

"Why? Are we going to fuck now?" Luna asked. As fast as it had disappeared, the 'fun' Luna seemed to be back. "I certainly hope so. I've been worried your cock was going to rip through you pants. That has got to be painful."

"Huh...what?" Harry sputtered.

"Oh please Harry, you've wanted to shag me the minute you saw me on your bed. I must say you've been quite the gentleman but right now I don't want a gentleman; I want you to take me. I want to know what it is like to have sex with a real wizard. I want you to wash away the memories with your honest lust!" Luna leaned forward and started to kiss him passionately as her hands started to undo Harry's pants.

To say that Harry was a bit gob-smacked would have been an understatement! However, he was a Seeker and they were all about speed. He rapidly helped Luna undress him and almost ripped some of Luna's clothes off getting her naked as well. He was amazed at how ethereal her body was. It seemed to glow with a radiance that Katie didn't have. Of course Katie's body was taunt and tanned from all of her time on the Quidditch pitch. She also had a smashing set of tits. Luna, however, had very small breasts but whose nipples

where huge and pointed. Her areolas almost took up most of her the tips of her breasts.

Seeing the direction of his gaze, Luna cupped her breasts and fingered her nipples. "I take it you like?" she asked coyly.

'Oh yeah!" Harry said in a hoarse voice. He unconsciously took his cock in his hand and started stroking it. Considering that he was still a virgin, this was the typical sexual act for him. Plus something in the back of his mind told him he wouldn't last long anyway.

Luna leaned forward, primping her breasts at him. "Do you want to cover my hard nipples with your hot seed? I think you do! I know I want you to. Come on Harry! Show me what a young wizard can do! I'm through with old, worn out men." Luna figured talking dirty would help keep Harry from falling back into his self-conscious ways. It was so cute how shy he could be when so many witches at Hogwarts would leap into his bed if he only asked. Not that he ever seemed to have noticed that Luna thought. Of course, Luna had had enough of the filth that had been forced on her. She was more than ready for some 'honest' dirty play so the words came easily to her lips. She couldn't help but lick those same lips as the erotic sight before her.

Harry continued to jerk off as Luna cooed and played with her nipples. She continued with a string of dirty comments and suggestions. That her voice was becoming more and more filled with lust made things all the more erotic to Harry. As was so often the case when Katie had done similar things to get him going, Harry didn't last long and his cum came boiling out in explosive spurts. His eyes rolled back in their sockets and he almost fainted as he shot load after heavy load all over Luna. Most of it struck her tits but his body was jerking so much that he shot some on her face as well. Harry's aura flashed with power to the point where the room seemed to brighten for a moment.

For Luna it was an amazing sight. She had a few of her 'johns' jerk off onto her. Most of them had done it to just degrade her. Harry, on the other hand, had looked like he had been unable to keep from touching himself while looking at her. This made her wetter than she had ever been in her life. The feeling of his cum, hot on her tits and lips, was so very different from the weak, yellowed spunk most of her 'clients' had barely been able to shoot. Harry by contrast seem

to be a wellspring of cum as spurt after spurt continued to cascade down upon her. It was Harry's aura, however, that took her breath away as it flared with power, crashing through her and bringing her to a surprise orgasm.

Harry practically collapsed on the bed, his breathing labored and heavy. Luna was breathing hard as well from the unexpected orgasm that seemed to just erupt from deep within her due to Harry's aura spiking. She was smiling as she took her fingers and rubbed Harry's cum into her breasts and licked what had hit her face off her fingers. It tasted like nothing she had ever had before. She wasn't sure if it was magic or Harry's semen was just naturally tasty.

Luna rolled over after she had finished rubbing all of Harry's spunk into her alabaster skin to see him still panting. His death-curse green eyes, however, were on her as if he could pull her into himself with just his gaze. This made her quiver inside in a way she had never felt before. From his gasps Luna felt it must have been a long time since he had had an orgasm for him to be as wiped out as he was. She looked down and noticed that while Harry was still winded, his cock was still semi-hard. With a smile of anticipation she snaked down and took it in her mouth.

Harry groaned as Luna sucked out what little cum was left in his cock. He was still sensitive and his aura seemed to be still sparking but he couldn't tell her to stop. Her tongue just felt too good! In short order his cock was once again erect and pulsing with blood and need. As he struggled under her oral assault, a musky smell caught his attention and he realized the Luna was practically wetting the bed due to her own desire and need. Before he had been booted off the Quidditch team by Umbitch, Katie had taught him how to orally please her and he had seriously enjoyed it. With a grunt he positioned himself and forced Luna's legs opened and started to lick her wet slit.

Luna moaned around Harry's cock. She had never had a guy go down on her before! Sure she and a few of the other Ravenclaw girls had experimented not to mention all she had done over the years with Ginny Weasley. She hadn't gotten along with the other girls of her year but she often found comfort in the arms of Su Li and Padma Patil. For all the talk about how exotically beautiful they were, they were discriminated against more often than not. Luna

remembered the time Padma had gotten up her courage to ask Lisa Turpin for a bout of girl sex and she had told Padma she wouldn't sully herself with a wog like her! So Luna, herself an outcast, often had the Indian and Chinese girl in her bed and between her legs.

This, however, was totally different. Harry's tongue was rougher and his aura so different from the girls she had been with. Plus Harry already had started to finger-fuck her as he tongued her clit. For some reason only Padma would do that and Luna usually had to ask. She was finding it very difficult to concentrate on sucking his wonderful cock as Harry's tongue drove her wild.

Then Harry's pinky slid up her puckered anus and she almost orgasmed right there. She felt Harry immediately stop everything he was doing and tensed up as well. "Oh god no, Harry! Don't stop! You are wonderful! Finger-fuck me! Fuck my arse as well!" She felt him hesitate so she bucked her hips to urge him on. She felt him stick his thumb into her cunt while he started to fuck her arse with his index finger. He soon got a rhythm going and went back to tonguing her clit as well.

Harry's hard cock slipped out of her mouth as she couldn't continue other than uncoordinated jerks on his cock with her hand. She was moaning and panting and giving out semi-incoherent comments of praise. Her hips where bucking back against Harry's tongue and fingers. She had never felt so full before! She loved how his finger felt up her bum.

Harry was in heaven; he had always enjoyed going down on Katie and Luna tasted even better. Plus while Katie was passionate, Luna seemed on fire! Soon enough she began to keen and then let out a wordless shriek of pure lust as her orgasm crested through her. Remember his time with Katie, he didn't let up and sure enough Luna orgasm peaked only to have another, more powerful orgasm, rip through her. Harry finally stopped when he worried that she was going to hyperventilate.

While Luna lay panting on the bed, Harry wandlessly summoned a towel and wipe Luna's juices off his chin and cleaned his hands. By the time he was done, Luna breathing was a bit more under control and she was watching him from half-closed eyes.

"I need you to fuck me now, Harry," Luna said; her voice heavy with need.

"Who am I to deny you when you ask so nicely?" Harry joked as he help her spread her legs and adjust the pillows. As much as the humor had come easy to him, Harry found that his mouth had gone dry at her bold demand. He felt as if skin was hot to the touch and blood seemed to be roaring in his ears. He was about to become a man! As he rubbed his cock-head up and down her slit he paused. "Uhm Luna, I don't have any sort of protection."

Luna was already practically panting, "Just fuck me Harry. As long as you don't cum in me, I can take care of it. I'll tell you all about it later. I need you inside of me now, Harry! Fuck me please! You can't know what you're doing to me!" she begged.

Harry hesitated for another second and Luna's eyes popped open to see a odd look on his face, "What's wrong Harry?"

"I...I've never done this before. I'm a virgin and you...well I just want to do it right." Harry said in a oddly unsure voice.

Luna sighed and leaned forward with a lusty growl and grabbed the teen by his tight arse and pulled him deep into her. "Oh Harry, you will be fine...oh yeah, that's already better than anything I've had." Luna groaned happily as Harry filled her up. Having a real wizard, a young wizard who smelled like what a man should filled her senses. She fell back against the pillows and arched her back, her pointy nipples enticing Harry anew. She began to buck her hips against Harry, urging him on to give her what she so desperately craved. All of her pent up desires she had kept hidden deep within her ever since her father had betrayed her was boiling up out her. Harry's aura, ringing with lust, was washing over her driving her wild.

Harry's mouth felt dry as dust and he focused on just getting a natural rhythm going. He had a bit of a hard go as Luna was practically thrashing under him. He couldn't believe the feeling around his cock. It was hot, tight and everything he had expected and so much more. For some reason Harry had expected her to be looser. He guessed that old wizards had flaccid dicks after all. He concentrated on his thrusts into the bucking girl, alternating deep thrusts to the occasional harder and faster ones. No matter how much fun he had had together with Katie Bell, there had always

been a part of him that held back. As Luna was almost leaving welts in his back with nails digging in passionately, Harry found his mind shutting down leaving only that most primal part of him in control.

The room was filled with the sound of their bodies slapping together. Their moans mingled as they both ground against each other. This was not some sunny lover's tryst in a high garden. Raw need bleed off the two teens like steam. The sweet smell of sex and sweat mingled and drove them both further along in their desire. The pair's world had shrunk to only encompass the lumpy bed that creaked and swayed under them as the pace of their fucking increased as their passions continued to rise.

Harry pushed back up onto his hands to take in the erotic sight that was Luna underneath him. She was practically glowing, her alabaster skin shining with the sweat of their passions. Luna reached out and returned to pinching her nipples and Harry felt her cunt tighten around him as she orgasmed. Harry was amazed! Katie had told him witches could cum a lot more than wizards but seeing it (and feeling it!) was another thing. All too soon he felt the familiar feeling in his balls. He cursed himself for having so little staying power but the roar of his need was not to be denied!

"Oh God Luna, I'm...I'm going to cum!" Harry gasped out as he unconsciously started to fuck her faster and harder. He felt as if body was acting on its own accord as if following a script written long before conscious thought.

"Yes! Cum for me Harry! I want to taste you again! Cum in my mouth for me, baby!" Luna squealed. She licked her lips in anticipation of sucking his hot cum straight from the source. Sure enough Harry began to grunt and started to quake. He pulled out and Luna hungrily guided his cock into her mouth. It was Harry's turn to give a wordless groan that turned into a roar as he shot his load deep into Luna's mouth.

Luna greedily sucked it down although she had a bit of trouble concentrating as Harry's aura flared again as he orgasmed. Again this sent a wave of pleasure through her as if every sensor in her body was stimulated and she orgasmed again. However she wanted to drain Harry dry so she worked through the pleasure, sucking his hot seed out of him as she fondled his balls to coax every last drop

out of him. She marveled at the warmth of it on her tongue as if Harry was shooting fire into her mouth.

Finally Harry had to beg Luna to stop as the feeling got to intense and he fell back onto the bed finally spent. Luna smiled as she saw this time his cock was rapidly shrinking. She had certainly had sucked him dry after all. Her own body was still tingling with little muscle twitches. In that moment she knew she was ruined on wizards. She gazed up and down Harry's wiry but toned frame with appreciation as he gasped for air and trying to come down from his own mind-blowing experience. She doubted any man could ever top what she had just experienced and she was happy that she had made Harry's first time so obviously memorable.

It was just as well, Luna thought since he was all she wanted in a wizard. Besides she was her mother's daughter after all so she preferred the softer feel of a witch's touch. Luna leaned back and let out a sigh of pure pleasure as she remembered that not everything she had seen in her scrying had been dark and terrible. Harry would gather around him a bevy of delicious witches that Luna would taste and devour. Her ultimate fate was unknown to her but Luna knew at least she and Harry would enjoy pleasures worthy of a sultan before the end.

"Merlin's beard, Luna that was...fucking brilliant that's what that was!" Harry said as he tried to catch his breath. His heart was still racing and again it felt to him like his aura was flaring and sparking. Everything he had ever heard had warned that someone's first time was never the experience that stories or movies made them out to be. If that was the case then he was trapped in one of those books or movies because what they had just done had easily been the most amazing thing in his life. Considering he had fought off a sixty foot basilisk with only a sword when he was twelve that was saying something! This thought brought forth a happy, contented laugh.

Luna gave a coy smile as she licked up a bit of his cum that had overflowed onto her lips. Harry certainly came a lot more than the wizards she had been forced to suck off!

Harry rolled off the bed and again looked a bit unsure of himself. "Luna, I don't know much about after sex etiquette but would you like to join me in the shower?"

Luna laughed, "Harry just because I have had sex since I was ten, do you really think I know anything about it? Trust me; in every way that truly counts, this was my first time as well. All the other men just wanted to use me or worse, hurt me to make themselves feel better. You are the first to give a shit about how I felt and I love you for it. I'll gladly take a shower with you. You can scrub me and then I scrub you and then we can see how long the hot water lasts!"

Harry watched in appreciation as the naked girl skipped past him into the bathroom. She certainly had a pert arse! He stood there just wallowing in this change of fortune as he heard Luna turn on the shower. He felt his cock give a bit of a twinge as heard Luna's voice over the water, "I've always wanted try a shag in the shower!"

Harry noticed his reflection in the mirror; he had the widest, shit-eating grin he had ever seen. "Fuck Fate!" he told his reflection. "I'm getting lucky today and I deserve it!" Harry then went into the bathroom with thoughts of skiving out of Hogwarts on his Firebolt forgotten.

XxXxX

A/N: This chapter was changed slight to help show that Harry, while a prisoner, is using this time to good purpose. He isn't suddenly Super!Harry after being possessed by Voldemort and having his magic unbound. He spent most of his summer trying not to drown in the memories he suddenly had that weren't his. Once he did he was able to start using that power and that takes some training as well.

GEEK! Yes, I know...through out this fic you will find little literary 'Easter eggs' – full points to those who spot them. I'm sorry, I can't help myself!

Lemony Goodness: I know a lot of you folks out there aren't here to read erotica so feel free to skim those parts. I will try to keep the sex from falling into endless 'Ikea' sex scenes of Tab A into Slot B.

CHAPTER THREE – NEMO ME IMPUNE LACESSIT

NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 26th 1996 – AFTERNOON

Harry marveled at how quickly life could change. One minute he was in the center of a maze, the next he was involved in a necromantic ritual to bring Voldemort back to life. That was a good example, Harry thought. Today, however, had a much nicer example. He been alone and then he was not. This morning he had been desperately fighting his body's need for release and now he was actually a bit shagged out.

Harry glanced at the pretty girl asleep on his arm. Luna had admitted before dropping off to sleep that she too felt that she had reached her limit. Harry had tried to see how many orgasms he could give her. Plus, she had told him about how his aura made her cum every time he did.

Harry figured she was well and truly done considering that after their bout of shower sex; he probably had pushed her limit when he buggered her bent over the vanity. Harry grinned to himself; not his fault that the mirror in the bathroom was small and set low so Luna had to bend over to work on her hair after getting out of the shower. How could he resist such a lovely arse sticking up at him? She may not be a 'baby that's got back' sort of gal as the song Dudley like so much said, but her butt was a picture of pert perfection.

Luna had, of course, retaliated when they had returned to the bed for a nap. While in the shower, she had mentioned about how she liked having girl sex in the shower with Su Li because they were the same height which made it easier to play with each other's soapy slits. This had gotten Harry quite erect which led to him taking her hard against the tile wall of the shower. When they had finally made it back to the bed, Harry had declared that his penis was done for the day. With an evil smile she had started to tell him of all her sexual exploits with Padma Patil and Su Li. She had laughed when Harry had accused her of necromancy since she obviously had awakened his cock from the dead. She climb on top of him and had at least two orgasms till Harry finally was able to cum which brought her to another aura-induced orgasm herself.

Now she was cuddled up next to him with an ethereal smile on her sleeping face. Harry's heart was heavy with emotion. He was filled with happiness and this was a rare feeling for him. He hadn't felt anything remotely like this since he last been with Katie. Of course with Katie their sex had the air of summer fling. Katie had joked Harry was a good fuck buddy right before that bitch Umbridge had kicked him off the team. Their sex had been friendly but they both knew it wasn't like they were a thing. Or so Harry had thought.

Thinking back on that, Harry had to wonder. Katie often looked sad after the end of their D.A. nights together. There had been a time when she had come up to him as he was getting ready to leave to ask him something. Before she could, however, Hermione had come up with something she had just thought of regarding a spell Harry was having some trouble with but one he wanted to teach the group. Hermione wanted to work on it right then but Harry wasn't as socially clueless as his bushy-haired friend could be when presented with an intellectual problem. So he put off Hermione and had asked if he could help Katie. She had bitten her lip and demurred and left quietly leaving him to Hermione's extended lesson plan for the evening.

Harry wondered if she had wanted to renew their special warm-ups or after game warm-downs as she as she sometimes called them. Considering how everyone seemed to think Hermione was his girlfriend, he could see now that Katie probably didn't want to get in her way. In retrospect this rather bothered Harry. He owed a lot to Katie. She had really taken the time to try and make himself feel comfortable with his body and what was expected due to his growing magic. She could have made it a very clinical thing or she could have really damaged his ego but she always had a playful time of it. Towards the end, they had a lot of good times together. Just thinking of her taunt arse and smashing tits got his cock stirring. Harry grimaced since the old 'John Thomas' was a bit raw and getting an erection hurt.

"I'm not letting that anywhere near me," a sleepy voice said into his ear.

Harry leaned over and kissed Luna, "No worries, love. I was just thinking about some of the few happy things in my life prior to today."

"What's her name?" Luna said as she stretched.

"How do you know it's a she? I'm notorious for being a closet poof," Harry said waggling his eyebrows.

"Harry if you were a mincer, they would have to pry Colin Creevey off of you. Now who is she?" Luna asked.

Harry smiled at the mental image of Colin humping his leg like a little dog...which some days wasn't far from the truth. "Katie Bell. She 'took me in hand' my third year because since I missed The Talk I didn't know the importance of wanking it. Because of my relative's choice of a parish, I got saddled with the venomous Father Gordon who felt most sins came back to touching oneself. So by my Third Year I was a bit of a mess. Good old Oliver Wood saw the signs and couldn't have his best player having magical back-up. It might have messed up his chance to get on a reserve team after Hogwarts.

Luna played with Harry's hair a bit, "How did you miss The Talk? I hardly saw you my first year so I don't really remember. That and I was loony back then."

"Oh while all the Second Year boys were getting all the gruesome details, I was recovering from being attacked by a basilisk. Phoenix tears or no, I was still a mess." Harry said. Then his face clouded over and his tone darkened. "Of course now I know I also had half of Tom Riddle's soul in my head. It explains why I was so out of it."

Noticing Harry's cock had shrunk quickly at the change in topic, Luna quipped, "Well Harry now you know if you ever have an erection in class and you get called to the board you can think of Chamber of Secrets and you'll be okay."

Harry blinked at this and he laughed his sudden bad mood evaporating. "Luna, I really love you. You always know how to make me feel better."

Luna looked serene, "Of course I do. I am to be your Dark Lady after all. How could I not follow you after you kill my father for me?"

Harry blinked and sat up and looked at her. "I didn't realize I needed one or that I was a Dark Lord. I didn't think you ever read that trash they write in the Daily Prophet." Harry decided to let that last part about her father slide for the moment.

Luna got out of bed and put on a bathrobe that had been in the closet. That it fit a student had made Harry wonder what sort of 'counseling' the previous teacher had done here. "I'm not talking about the Daily Prophet's blatant attempt to whip public opinion against you, Harry. I'm talking about being your Dark Lady while you destroy magical Britain." Luna said with all seriousness.

Harry could tell she was serious but he wasn't sure how serious he wanted to take it. Just because her mind was now clear didn't mean she had to make sense. Considering what happened to Neville's parents, the effects of all those spells might have muddled her way of thinking permanently.

Luna gave an evil smile, "Oh I know what you're thinking Harry. I don't need to use legimency to see what is written all over your face. I am not offended since it is the most reasonable theory that fits the fact. Daddy would be proud of you since you didn't let me being your friend stop you from using Occam's razor to cut to the most probable answer in that I'm crazy."

Harry remained silent. His feeling about her from her aura was interesting. Her aura reminded him of the feeling he had as he held Draco by the throat and debated whether or not he was going to kill him. If her aura had a taste it would be that of...revenge?

"Harry, I may be broken, but I'm not crazy. What I am is thirsting for vengeance. I will have it and I fully have pledged myself and my Fate to going as far as I must go to fulfill that. I also know I will follow you along that path. You and I are wedded to Nemesis. We shall be Her instruments to bring punishment upon the wicked and bring low those whose hubris has led them down dark paths."

Luna seemed to glow and her aura crackled with energy, her voice had the ring of Trelawney's when she had made the prophecy to Harry in his Fourth Year. "My bloodline carries the seeds of the Seer. My father's sister is the one that made the prophecy regarding you and Voldemort. So this last Summer Solstice, when the sun was at its zenith, I did a scrying. I saw the path you shall choose to take. You shall rise up, my Dark Lord, my love. You shall awaken from your prison to punish those around you."

Luna's eyes became unfocused and Harry felt as if Fate was solidifying around them. "From the lands far to the west your forefathers came and help found fair Avalon. They kept their troth with all folk and pledged themselves to uphold the peace. When Camelot burned and the fair fey folk retreated, it was your blood that sought to fight back the tide breaking upon these isles. It was your kin which brought the clans from their icy home to this land before being betrayed by the those who knew not the meaning of keeping faith. Now is the time for the reckoning; now is the time to balance ancient harmonies. As Invictus you shall burn down that legacy that has become tainted by small-minded men. As Invidia I shall be at your side, shepherding the others that shall come after me. The pale shadow of what was once Avalon shall finally be brought down as it must be. All of this I have seen, my Dark Lord, my love."

Harry quickly rose and caught Luna as she suddenly seemed to lose herself and began to fall. She was barely breathing and her whole body was trembling. Harry had to lean in to hear her whispered words.

"By denying your Wyrd and challenging Fate, you have proven yourself worthy for a larger Fate. You shall be the very Paladin of Nemesis and the wicked and the proud shall fall before you my Dark Lord, my love."

XxXxX

NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – MORNING

Harry felt a measure of déjà vu in that here he was again thinking how life could quickly change. Yesterday morning he had been merely a boy pissed off at the world. Today he was a man with his path stretching out ahead of him. Yesterday he thought he was simply going to chuck it all and return to the Muggle world. Today he knew he would leave little standing before he left these isles.

Harry dressed carefully. Den, the house elf that had been tasked to bring him food during his time in the tower, had a letter from Dumbledore along with dinner. While not as enthusiastic as Dobby, Den had visibly preened when Harry had complimented him for somehow knowing Luna had needed dinner as well. The letter informed Harry that Auror Tonks would arrive promptly at 9 o'clock

the next morning to take him to Gringotts to resolve an issue with House Black.

Harry felt that being a challenger of Fate had its drawbacks. He wasn't sure if he was emotionally ready to meet up with Draco again. He and Luna had talked long into the night about many things, most of them led down dark pathways.

Harry looked down at the sleeping girl. The night had been very taxing for her emotionally. It hadn't been easy on him, but he had been working for a long time on ordering his mind to keep all of the Riddle/Voldemort memories in line. Perhaps after a while he had simply gotten numb.

Bastard that he was, Xenophilius Lovegood was as good as Luna had said he was. He had collected quite the trove of plots, plans and convoluted clues about all sorts of things since Dumbledore had risen to power in the wake of his defeat of Grindelwald. He also had collected quite the useful trove of items that Harry was itching to get his hands on. Useful or not, Harry was still going to kill him, preferably in a very painful way.

Harry looked at the mirror. While he didn't see Riddle's face, he wondered had he too looked in the mirror one morning and asked himself, "Is this the face of a Dark Lord?" Harry didn't know if there was some sort of Dark Lord Handbook that detailed all what was needed before drawing one's dark plots against the world. Glancing at his beloved snowy owl, Harry thought he needed to get another familiar though. Hedwig just didn't fit the part. He needed a 'public' familiar like something out of a Bond film. Maybe a Grim...

That he had accepted Luna's pronouncement that he would be a Dark Lord, Harry had no doubt. Listening to Luna deep into the night had wheels in Harry's head turning. In retrospect his respect for Hermione had dropped a bit. Much of what Harry had learned had been there all the time and the 'brightest witch of her age' missed it all. Or had she? Harry shook his head at that dark thought.

The ease of the traps in their First Year should have been a dead give-away. That Dumbledore had somehow missed Voldemort in Quirrell or Barty Crouch Jr. masquerading as Alastor Moody strained credulousness. Then there was everything to do with House Potter, Black and even Longbottom. Were Harry's parents dead and

Neville's parents insane simply because Dumbledore needed to find out which boy would become marked?

Of course there was also the realization that House Potter was gutted. He had almost nothing to look forward to as Lord Potter. Just as what happened to Neoptolemus Lovegood, somehow Dumbledore (or at least someone linked to him) had used their fortune during the war and with their deaths had taken the opportunity to break up what had been the wealthy Potter commercial empire. Gone were the dairies, the breweries and the fields that grew the pumpkins from whence their daily pumpkin juice at Hogwarts came from. Stately Potter Manor was plundered of magic and fineries and sold to some venture capitalist from the Americas leaving Harry with a mere pittance in his Trust Fund.

It was obvious to Harry that someone was banking on the idea that he wasn't going to survive his final battle with Voldemort to ask pointed questions regarding his heritage. That he would have found all this out on his seventeenth birthday meant the clocking was ticking against him. What ever plot he had been unaware of till recently had less than a year to go.

So as the evening had worn on and darkness fell over Scotland, Harry had felt the coming night matched the darkness falling over his heart. Harry had never wanted to be the savior of Wizarding Britain. He didn't want the fame or the notoriety. The only acclaim he craved was honestly gained such as on the Quidditch pitch. Inside he yearned for the quiet life, a seemingly boring life. He knew from listening to his neighbors while mowing lawns back in Little Whinging for an extra pound or two that many middle-aged men felt their lives lacked something. The fools! They didn't know what they had. By the time most teens enter secondary school, Harry had all the 'flash' to last him a life time.

Harry had hoped (nay prayed!) that somehow he would defeat Voldemort and he could then play some Quidditch before settling down to a nice house with a wife and some kids and perhaps coach at primary school or something as mundane and people would leave him alone. Harry knew this was not to be his fate and he accepted that now with all of his heart.

It was fitting that Hogwarts was in Scotland because Harry felt he had taken Scotland's motto of *Nemo Me Impune Lacessit* to heart.

Translated from Latin it was 'None shall provoke/injure me with impunity' and that's precisely how Harry felt. He had tried to teach that to Draco on the train but now he had to teach it to everybody else.

There was just too much at stake. Too many crimes cried out for justice. Harry had a rather dim view of a lot of things in the magical world going into yesterday's revelations. Now he knew it had to be cast down. Magical Britain was diseased and needed to be pulled up by the roots before a new one could be planted.

Harry gave a slight smile at that analogy. Using that metaphor made it sound like Neville should have been the Chosen One and not him. Of course Neville didn't have it in him to do what needed to be done. He hoped he wouldn't have to kill him. Harry knew Neville was a Gryffindor for a reason and in the end would fight for what he thought was right. He just hoped that Neville would see that 'the Greater Good' that so many people fought to defend was a sick lie.

Thinking of Neville made Harry think of the other's in his life. Again Harry was reminded how he felt like his life had been a play and only now was he seeing the actors behind the parts.

NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 26th 1996 –
EVENING

"What?" Harry exclaimed.

"I said all the Weasleys are pigs. Oh Mr. Weasley isn't a pig. He's more of a sheep. I'm surprised he was able to have so many children because it is obvious who has the cock in that family!" Luna said.

"Okay, I'll admit Percy is a pretentious git and Ron can be a prat, but how does that make all of the Weasleys pigs?"

Luna sighed. She cursed herself for the slip of her tongue. She really hadn't wanted to get into this on top of all the other things she had uncovered. Oh well, in for a penny, in for a pound.

"Harry, I don't live very far from the Weasleys and so I was over there quite often to play with Ginny before I started to realize a few things and Daddy didn't want me to leave the house. You only get to

see them on Holidays or when there are others there. Trust me; the day to day Weasley house is different. Personally I think all Mr. Weasley gave to his kids was the hair. The rest of their nasty traits must have come from Molly Beastly's Prewitt line."

"Molly Beastly?" Harry asked.

"My pet name for her," Luna said. "She was famous for her temper in school and it is widely accepted that Mr. Weasley married her only because she was also famous for her potion brewing. She wouldn't be the first witch to snag a husband by what came out of her cauldron. Even with having all of those kids, she certainly still knows how to get around. I have seen what cannot be unseen without obliiviations; my father having sex with her. Since he's sterile, he's the perfect 'other man' for her especially since were just down the way from the Burrow. For all her persona of a uptight, upstanding mother, she's down-right twisted in bed."

Luna made a disgusted face. "Let's just drop that topic. Anyway, I'm sure you've noticed, Harry, that Magicals don't have many kids. Ever wonder how the Weasleys managed it, especially considering how poor they were? I mean it's not like they're ignorant Muggles with no way to keep from having more kids."

Harry had wondered that from time to time but didn't know enough to even guess as to why.

"Well one of the theories that Daddy has is Molly used some rather morally...questionable potions to help her with her fertility. As to the why, have you noticed how many House only have female heirs? Houses like the Bones, the Abbots, Parkinsons, Zabini and my own just to name a few. Six Weasley boys married properly would create a huge bloc of power as well as wealth. Quite a coincidence that the Weasleys are staunch allies of a noted alchemist who discovered the twelve uses of dragon's blood and partner to the legendary Nicholas Flamel don't you think? Of course the Prewetts were noted for their potions after all. There were always rumors that for the right price, the right potion could be brewed by them for you."

"Hold on, I thought the Prewetts were a respected light side family," Harry protested.

"Ha! I am sure that's what you were told. The truth is, Harry, the Prewetts were a nasty lot. Mrs. Weasley's brothers Fabian and Gideon were bullies and they came from a long line of them. The Prewetts always volunteered to fight whoever the Dark Lord of the day was. The problem is that they were almost as bad as those they fought. The Prewett twins certainly enjoyed hurting people and when the war started up, they jumped at the chance to go fight. " Luna said with a disdainful sniff.

"Did you think that the Marauders were the only ones in Gryffindor who needed Slytherins?" Luna asked. "Much of the current animosity between the two houses is because of the Prewitt twins. I've heard plenty of stories about that time. The Marauders might prank you but they did it with flare and one had to admire the art of it. You ended laughing at the very prank you were the victim of. From what Daddy says, except for what they did to Professor Snape, the Marauders were rarely mean. The same couldn't be said of the Terror Twins as they were known then. They current twins are almost as bad."

"Oi! What's wrong with Fred and George?" Harry sputtered.

Luna gave a sneer that wouldn't have looked out of place on Snape's face. "What's wrong? They're pigs; I thought I already made that clear. Pigs that bully. I don't know what they did in the Gryffindor Common room. Maybe there it was all 'harmless fun' for the laughs. Outside of your tower, the Twins where spiteful and mean. It wasn't just the Slytherins either. If you got in their sights you were in for pain and humiliation. Ever hear of Patricia Stimpson?"

Harry nodded. He seemed to recall George mentioning her name once.

Luna looked grim, "Everyone seems to think she had a nervous breakdown due to stress from studying for her OWLs But I know for a fact that she tried to commit suicide after the Twins hit her with a really vicious prank. Pretty girls at Hogwarts prayed they don't catch their eye since the Twins were and still are quite infamous for their petty vindictiveness. A girl they fancied who turned them down when they chatted her up was suddenly their favorite new target."

Harry looked glum. He had heard some rumors of this from time to time but he hadn't given it much thought. A nasty voice in the back

of his head reminded him that ignoring things at Hogwarts had been his modus operandi since the beginning.

"Oh yes, Harry, the Twins were a terror as much as their uncles had been. Sure everyone was happy they pranked that toad Umbridge but I would bet a shag with Snape that many of the girls cheering that day they so brilliantly exited Hogwarts were doing so because they were leaving, period. Too many had their pubic hair magically made to become ingrown or had their bras and knickers charmed to release burning itching powder. There is a relatively substantiated rumor that the reason that Sally-Anne Perks didn't come back after her OWLs is because the Twins messed with her contraceptive potion and ruined the condom her lover was using so she ended up pregnant. From what I've heard, her parents did not take that well at all."

"As bad as the Twins are, they are just following in their brother's footsteps. William and Charles were skirt chasers who couldn't keep their quills out of forbidden pots. William was especially bad after he made Head Boy since he seemed to think that meant he was entitled to as many witches sucking him off as possible. He was subtle and never got caught but he had a way of making girls realize it was in their best interest to fuck him if he so desired. Girls who refused were made to suffer for it. Some wonder if the reason he left the country to work for Gringotts was because there are a lot of fathers, uncles and brothers of those witches after his blood."

"Then there is Charles. He was into just as many knickers as his brother. Rumor has it Professor Dustan's sudden desire to retire was because Charles knocked her up in a Forbidden Forest fuck. It is how Hogwarts got saddled with that twit Kettleburn who Daddy said wouldn't know a crup from a kneazle if it didn't bite him...which would probably explained his few limbs."

Luna smiled at the shocked look on Harry's face. "Oh it gets much better if you can put it that way. Ever wonder why Charles in Romania as a dragon handler when he was renowned as a Seeker? I'm sure you've heard all the stories about how you just might be better than him. Well lightning struck twice in his case because he got the Puddlemere United star chaser pregnant while he was on the reserve team. Right in the middle of a season where everyone predicted they'd go all the way to the World Cup. With their best chaser gone, Puddlemere didn't even make it to the semi-finals. To

say that Charles had to leave the country quickly is a bit of an understatement."

"This brings us to Percy. He, at least, is as odious on the outside as he is on the inside. He loved being a prefect because it allowed him to roam the halls to try and catch witches doing something they shouldn't. He'd trade sexual favors in lieu of loss of House points or detentions. There are far too many witches here at Hogwarts who know what his small dick tastes like."

Luna was silent for a minute. "He's an even worse fuck, I can tell you. I found that out last year during the Holidays when he and Eric Munch, a pal of his at the Ministry, spent their Christmas bonus on the 'Quibbler Specialty Package' as my father likes to call it. So while other girls were enjoying sledding, caroling and other holiday fun, I got to be used by Munch and Percy the social-climbing bastard. Luckily for me neither one of them can keep their load for long. I think Daddy rates are by orgasm rather than time. If a wizard cums too soon and wants more, he'd have to pay more. As I said, that time it was a quick double slam-bam and out they door they went."

Luna looked at him with a piercing gaze, "I would hope you will kill him for me as well. Oh I could do it but somehow I think you will be more cruel. I think I would try to be too creative and it might lessen the suffering I want to exact from him. Sadly all I can do is give you ideas about how to kill Daddy since Higher Magic won't let me harm the Head of my House without practically killing myself as well."

Harry nodded grimly, not a little surprised at how calmly he had accepted that he would kill Percy Weasley. Bastards like him were enablers; they were the minions that stoked the egos of their bosses and helped put their evil plans in motion. However, Luna had been totally correct. He was finally fully aware of the cesspool that was magical Britain and he would bring it down. 'The Paladin of Nemesis' rang true to him. His hand would be the one that balanced the scales and brought vengeance for those countless victims of the system. Killing Percy was simply putting down another symptom of the disease infecting the land.

Harry gave a sigh, "So, what about Ron? What dark secrets did I miss about him? I know he's a jealous git and he can't see a Slytherin without hating them. I never understood that. We have classes with them all the time and not all of them are bad. It's easy

to miss people like Paul Runcorn during the Draco and Pansy Drama Hour since he rarely talks. Tracey, Blaise and Daphne might seem a bit aloof but that hardly makes them Death Eaters. Hell from what Neville tells me even Millicent Bulstrode is actually pretty nice when she's not around Pansy. They are both in Sprout's Gardener group together."

Luna nodded, "I've thought on some things some things Daddy has talked about over the years with others. Not everyone who comes over is there to diddle me. Daddy knows a lot of interesting people who think deep thoughts. I remember one who felt Dumbledore stoked the Gryffindor versus Slytherin feud to focus the Lions on an enemy. Sort of primed them to be fighters. No one can say that Gryffs aren't brave but most of the time they aren't very bright so they make brilliant canon-fodder. It certainly helps that McGonagall is good at the whole 'duty for king and country' sort of behavior. Gives the message another hook. Can't let Old Grandmum McGonagall down, now can you? So Dumbledore can churn out good little Lions who readily march off to fight what ever cause is needed for 'the Greater Good' and all.

Harry harrumphed at that. "Yeah, led by The-Boy-Who-Lived. Hell, I practically trained him up a new crop of troops with Dumbledore's Army!"

"Did you Harry? Whose idea was it create the D.A. because it certainly wasn't you was it?" Luna asked with a knowing look on her face.

Harry did a face palm, "Wait! Finish up about Dark Ron before I hear about Dark Hermione. Damn it Luna, is anyone I know real?"

Luna thought about it for a bit, "Hmm except for Neville, no probably not. He's probably stuck in the same web of lies as you are considering he might have been The-Boy-Who-Lived instead of you. Well there is Ginny. For a Weasley she's not too bad."

"Great, the only Weasley that I can count on is a Boy-Who-Lived groupie," Harry complained.

"Oh shush, you'll probably enjoy shagging her. If you like Katie, Ginny is all that and a slice of toast. Trust me, I know from personal experience. She's is, however, known to be...enthusiastic if the

rumors about her post game 'warm downs' are any indication. Ronald apparently has a hard time remember that what goes on in the locker room stays in the locker room as you Quidditch types say. From what Ginny has hinted to me, she does a lot that has to stay in the locker room."

Luna laughed at the look on Harry's face; his chain was so easy to yank sometimes! "But back to Ronald. He's actually one of your worse enemies in the public opinion realm. You, Hermione and Ronald might be considered our generations Marauders in the sense of your adventures. If that is the case, Ronald is your Pettigrew which is rather ironic when one thinks about it."

Luna called for Den who appeared to Harry's surprise; he thought the house elf would only show up for him. She asked if he could bring some tea and the elf happily agreed. "You see Harry when you aren't around, Ronald hardly backs you up and then only if forced too by Hermione. If someone brings up something you did, Ronald always has something to say to cheapen it somehow. He knocks you down in a 'sins of omission' sort of way. He rarely, if ever, corrects people when they say bad things about you and his silence is enough proof to many that those things must be true. According to him you aren't talented but simply lucky. Your skill in Quidditch is merely because you have been given two really fast brooms. You are a teachers pet and everything goes your way because of your fame."

"So basically Ron is Draco Malfoy with red hair," Harry deadpanned.

Luna gave a laugh, "Yes that is a good way to look at it." They were interrupted when Den returned with their tea. Harry was sure to compliment him on the additional biscuits the elf had thought to bring. Harry also asked Den to tell Dobby not to feel bad that when it came to food Harry felt it better to go with the elf tasked for it. Harry didn't want to lose having Dobby bring him things if he could help it. The little elf had bowed and reassured Harry that Dobby understood. Apparently Dobby, as an ex-Malfoy elf, was used to the need to keep such things secret.

Luna munched on her biscuit with obvious enjoyment. Harry smiled at the girl's sweet tooth. Bellatrix was the picture of what he thought a Dark Lady should be like. The pretty blond with crumbs on her

blouse who loved pudding didn't quite fit the stereotype at all. Oh well, they always said to watch out for the quiet ones, Harry thought.

"So is Ron banging witches when I'm not around?" Harry finally asked after having some tea.

"Not that I've heard but then again I don't think Ronald is actually into girls." Luna replied.

"What? This from the bloke he seems to think I'm a poof?" Harry cried.

"Oh yes and he does help to spread that idea around. He lets Seamus bring it up but he definitely backs the idea up. The thing is Harry is because I'm loony people tend to talk around me like I'm a piece of furniture. So I hear things. I've overheard a few things, mainly from some of the boys in my year in Ravenclaw about Ronald. Harry, have you ever heard of the Wank Clubs?"

Harry nodded, "Yeah they are an open secret among the guys. Everyone knows about it but no one openly talks about it. Even in our dorm room with just us blokes, it's never directly talked about."

"That's because guy-sex is less accepted than girl sex." Luna said. "Maybe because we have more...buttons to push I guess you could say so witches tend to help each other out more. Plus considering how bad most wizards are, especially teen wizards, it's nice to have a helping hand who actually knows where your clitoris is."

Harry chuckled at that. "I know what you mean. I remember how adamant Katie was that I learn where her 'magic button' was and how to push it properly."

Luna gave a wide smile, "Remind me that I need to thank her later, Harry. Obviously my previous sexual encounters are best left forgotten but because of her my 'first' time was wonderful due to her. I should get her something nice...anyway, back to Ronald."

Luna poured herself a bit more tea. It was already late and they both felt they had a lot more to talk about before calling it a night so they needed the caffeine. As shocking as the revelations about the

Weasleys were, they were actually a calming break from some of the nastier truths Harry had learned so far.

"Well Ronald does go to the Wank Club. Actually, since I know you've never gone, you might not realize there really are five Wank Clubs. There is one per House and then a fifth that is rather secret since it spans all Houses. Again I'm not sure how much you know but from what I have gathered each of the House clubs are basically the same where the guys get together and talk about girls, brag about what they have done (or say they have done) and look at porn while rubbing one out."

Harry nodded, "That sounds about right. Sometimes, though, I think that Dean, Seamus and Ron consider our dorm a subsection of the Gryffindor club since they will often have wank contests to see who can either cum first or cum the farthest. It's another one of the reasons I had trouble getting myself off. It was disgusting coming into the dorm when they were doing things like that. I blessed the day I learned the silencing charm so I didn't have to listen to it. Their antics just reinforced my already bad opinion about touching myself. I think Neville felt pretty much the same way because he'd always made himself scarce when they were yanking their chains."

Luna made a face. "Maybe Hermione was right to call her group SPEW considering what it sounds like the elves have to clean up after."

Harry couldn't help but spit out the tea he'd been drinking, "Damn it Luna! Would you warn a bloke before you make a comment like that!" He said laughing.

Luna tried to look innocent and failed miserably. Smiling mischievously she went on. "Ronald goes to the Gryffindor club as well as making it to every meeting of the more secret fifth wank club. These things are a bit more involved. Instead of what is essentially just a bunch of guys jerking off in the same room, this group is more active. They have circle jerks and other more 'hands on' activities. Now what is really hushed up is that they have times where a bloke will suck off another so guys "can know what it feels like" or some excuse like that. I guess they see it like how girls will 'practice' kissing each other. Well the two boys I overheard were commenting about how often Ronald was the one sucking the other guy off."

Harry was thoughtful, "Funny how Colin has never gone to those clubs from what I've heard. The most 'obvious' poof at school and he's as chaste as a saint on Sunday."

Luna looked sad, "That may be true for Colin but I've noticed a few times around the Quidditch patch or even nights of our D.A. meetings that Ronald was often around Colin's friend Nigel. Didn't you ever notice that Nigel often left the meetings early?"

Harry nodded, a sick feeling growing in his stomach. "Yes, Nigel told me he couldn't keep up with the rest of us. His magical core just wasn't up to rest of the D.A.'s level. Considering he was only a Third Year at the time I wasn't surprised."

"Yes but you obviously didn't notice that Ronald would leave not long afterwards." Luna replied. "I don't know if it was consensual or not but even loony as I was, I was drawn to sniff around. I never caught them in the act but I did find them near each other in secluded places more often than not. Ronald was often quite flushed and easily flustered when I would catch up to him. He'd always have some excuse to move along and not talk to me. He almost bolted the one night I caught him coming out of a classroom when a few minutes later Nigel left the same empty classroom while I was talking to him."

Harry closed his eyes and let out a sigh, "What did Nigel say?"

"Oh he covered it up well. To this day I'm not sure what is going on. It very well might be that Ronald sort of forced the issue at first and Nigel grew to like it. I read once in some of my mother's journals that she believed one of the many mistakes people made was to dismiss how people would accept a bad situation like an abusive relationship. My mother felt that people needed "strokes" and if they couldn't get good ones, they would accept bad ones rather than having none at all. Nigel is a short, teased boy in a House all about bravery and other manly things and so the girls never seem to notice him. Maybe getting buggered by Ronald isn't something great but it's all he has." Luna said her voice rather melancholy.

Luna suddenly looked up at Harry, "And that finally brings us to Hermione."

"Let me guess, she's actually a succubus in disguise and is after my Chosen One super-semen that she will use to break the House Elves free of their enslavement?" Harry said.

Luna snorted. "No, nothing that silly. Hermione is simply an enigma. When I first met you, Harry, you were one as well. Nothing ever added up around you. Now I now why considering the different people and groups meddling in your life. With what I've uncovered and from a lot of the things you know due to Voldemort's memories, I think we can safely say we at least understand some of their weirdness in your life."

"Hermione, on the other hand, remains an enigma." Luna repeated.

"What do you mean? I've been thinking that she should have cottoned to a lot of the stuff that has been going on since our First Year. On thinking about it, I realized that I just wrote off her not catching on. I must have just thought since she tends to genuflect toward authority figures or what's written down that she just accepted everything about that incident at face value. She's certainly not one to go with a gut feeling like I am." Harry pointed out.

"Very true, Harry and on the surface an excellent explanation for her actions. An explanation I can't totally refute...but it doesn't feel right. Hermione doesn't feel right to me. Next time you see her I'd like you to read her aura. She is off somehow. I can't explain it but I know it. There is something hidden about her."

"Could it be that she used a Time-Turner for over a year?" Harry asked.

Luna's eye's were unfocused as she seemed trying remember something she had forgotten "Again that is the reasonable explanation, especially because my feeling about her somehow relates to time. I just can't shake the idea of her having the time turner was a means to a different end." Luna shook her head as if to clear it. She gave Harry a bit of a exasperated look, "The very idea she would be given a Time-Turner simply to take more classes is patently absurd and I'm a bit disappointed you accepted that whopper at face value."

Harry held up his hands as if in surrender, "Hey don't look at me. Maybe if I had gone to Slytherin House like the Sorting Hat had wanted, I'd be better at all this."

Luna gave a tight smile, "Yes and it will be interesting when that little revelations gets out, oh speaker to snakes! Maybe you'll get some from the Slytherin girls. Blaise is tasty and Tracey has a great set of chocolate knockers. Daphne might be interesting if she wasn't such a dish-rag and Tracey's pet. My word, even Millicent is starting to get better now that she's losing all that baby fat. She's certainly has better tits than even Lavender Brown and that's saying something!"

Harry raised his eyebrow at Luna. "Channel your mother often, Luna?"

Luna stuck her tongue out at him. "Just as you refused to play by the Headmaster's rule, I refuse to play by societies. Except for a notable exception which just happens to be in the room, girls are better to look at, better in bed, smell better and don't leave the toilet seat up. Except for you my Dark Lord, my love, I think I'll stick with girls."

Harry couldn't argue with that. The thought of Luna having sex with all of those girls gave his sore cock another twinge. Maybe later they could get another shag in before calling it a night. He smiled, "Well my 'Dark Lady' I see we both like a good set of tits."

Luna cupped her breasts and pouted, "Sadly I think I have what Muggles would call 'breast envy' as mine are sorely lacking."

Harry shook his head, "Luna your breasts are wonderful. I can't believe how big your nipples are! They are brilliant. Sure they may not stack up to the racks of the Slytherin girls but they suit you and I wouldn't have you any other way."

Luna gave a radiant smile and seemed to squirm with happiness for a bit. "Getting off the delectable topic of Slytherin hotties and their smashing knockers, Hermione has a 'taste' if you will of someone who has been touched by time. Again I can't help but feel her use of the time-turner was to mask what really happened with her in relation to time magic." Luna went on.

"Then there is the fact she acts as brake on you. She is Remus to your James Potter in a way. For that matter she is Remus to your Sirius Black," Luna said with a silly grin. "I'm not saying this is a bad thing but because she's a Muggleborn she doesn't know a lot about our culture and so can't answer embarrassing questions if you should ask.

"Ronald won't bring up such topics because he's either too stupid, doesn't care or perhaps is even been tasked to keep you ignorant. He is Molly Beastly's son after all. If Hermione is a brake on you, Ronald is Petrificus Totalus incarnate. He keeps you from studying, keeps you off doing silly things and generally drags you down. Between the two, you know enough to survive towards the Fate the prophecy has for you but ignorant of the questions you should be asking." Luna said.

"So...Hermione might be part of all this or she might just happen to be a handy tool that just happened to be available to be used." Harry mused.

"Hard to tell. I can say that Hermione often seems conflicted, almost bi-polar when it comes to you. Part of her obviously adores you, loves you and is loyal to you. Then there is this other part that can just come out nowhere and shut you down. If I hadn't done some surreptitious checks, I'd swear she was under charms like I was."

"What about Neville? He's a Pure-blood and could have filled me in on things." Harry asked.

Luna let out a sigh and looked sad. "Remember what I told you about how my mother felt people would accept bad strokes over none at all? I asked Neville about some of this recently. I asked him why he'd never filled you in on being Lord Potter or how House Longbottom had been the long time shield brothers to House Potter ever since they had come over from Norway and yet he barely talks to you until he started going to the D.A. meetings. Did you ever wonder about their embarrassing name, Harry? The Longbottoms got their names from the deep keels of their drakkars they used when they where Vikings. They where renown explorers and traders. It was a Longbottom who helped Leif Ericson find the Americas. They were one of the Houses the Potters had brought over to help prop up the Old Ways that were in danger due to more witches and wizards accepting Christianity."

"Really? How come I never knew all of this?" Harry complained.

Luna looked guilty. "Sorry Harry, I'll fill you in on all the interesting history of your family later. Let's just say your family has been here long before the Romans and have worked to try to keep the peace between the Picts, Celts, Welsh, Romans and Norsemen. It's one of the reasons they are one of the oldest and respected Ancient and Noble Houses."

"So what did Neville say?" Harry asked, hoping Neville wasn't secretly 'Dark Neville' and just another actor lying to him.

"He said his gran had told him not to get too involved with you. Apparently she felt that House Weasley was making a move and with House Longbottom being reduced to just her and Neville that it would be better to keep quiet and watch how things developed. Neville put his gran in a bit of a quandary he told me because she was angry that he had 'broke cover' to go with us to the Ministry as well as being proud of him for his actions there," Luna said.

"He told me he had to come with us; whenever House Potter was in need, House Longbottom had stood by them. Neville also felt he needed to at least see if House Weasley really had their hooks into you. All the tension between you and Ronald the previous year had gotten Neville thinking. That and he also noticed Ronald less than sterling reputation as your covert detractor."

Harry let out the breath he hadn't realized he had been holding. It was one thing to realize that you were turning your back on your previous life and taking up a path condemning you to being seen as a Dark Lord. It was another to contemplate killing a friend. Neville had grown a lot since their first year, but Harry would never forget the pudgy kid who had dared to stand up to him that night when he was off to face down Quirrell. He was relieved that even if they had a falling out in the months and years to come, at least Neville had been true.

"Okay, let's end this on a happy note and get back to the really nasty stuff." Harry said.

Luna gave an odd smile, "Don't worry Harry, you won't be alone in all of this. I wasn't able to see clearly but we will have allies. Let us hope Neville sees the need for what we do."

Harry took a deep breath. "I hope so too. I cannot afford sentiment. I can challenge Fate only so much and if my lot is to be the sword of justice, I must not anything sway me, not friends, not family. Even for someone like Neville. He'll either join, stay out of my way or I'll be forced to kill him. I just don't like how my life seems to be some sort of tragic opera. Killing Neville to prove my resolve just seems like something you'd expect in a bad Wagnerian opus. What frightens me is that seems to describe my life completely."

Luna reached out hugged Harry close and then she began to kiss him tentatively and then with more passion. Finally she broke the kiss and Harry was surprised to find she was crying. "Harry, my love, don't make the mistake of letting prophecy rule your life. You have a good heart. History may see you as a Dark Lord but your heart is pure. You are to be the surgeon's scalpel, the fire that burns the diseased trees down to let the forest grow. If you remain true to a heart that not even those vile Dursleys could corrupt, I have faith you will come through. Just let your heart rule your actions, in anger and in mercy. Don't let doubts defeat you before you start."

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NORTH TOWER, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – MORNING

Harry finished dressing and gave himself the once over in the mirror. He didn't know fashion very well but he thought he looked good. He didn't look like a kid trying to look older and more mature than he was. Of course Harry suddenly felt years older than he had just a few weeks before. Of course it didn't help he had decades of Voldemort's memories in him.

He looked at his watch and saw that it was almost time. He kissed the sleeping Luna good-bye and went out of the bedroom into the office to wait for Tonks. Luna had teased him the night before about how he thought she was going to be able to leave if he meant to keep his Firebolt. Lucky for him the door was simply charmed to keep him in. Harry had guessed it made it easier if different people

wanted to come and go. They wouldn't have to keep respelling the door each time since the charm only affected Harry.

Harry tried to order his thoughts and calm himself. He simply could not afford to let Malfoy get to him again. He had to be resolute. This reminded Harry of the semi-prophecy Luna had made the night before and so he went over to bookshelf. Something she had said last night reminded him of it. He finally found the book he was looking for and found the poem he remembered.

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

Yes, he was Invictus. Before Voldemort his head had been bloody but unbowed. Now he was the captain of his own soul and master of his own fate and he would go forth unafraid.

There was a knock on the door and a pretty, pink-haired auror entered. "Wotcher, Harry!" she greeted genially before she really got a look at him.

If Nymphadora had been asked later of her impression of Harry it would have been of stone wrapped in steel.

"Good morning, Auror Tonks." Harry said formally. "Shall we go so I can meet my fate?"

The stunned auror could only blink and then follow as Harry strode purposely out to seize the day.

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A/N: Nemo Me Impune Lacessit – Latin motto of Scotland: "None shall provoke/injure me with impunity" which I think pretty much sums up Harry and Luna right now.

Wyrd: Norse theological idea related to Fate. One's Wyrd is that which you are born into and it is hard to challenge. An example is your birth. I, for example, was born to white, middle-class Americans in the late 60's. Those facts 'frame' my Wyrd because they shape me in ways that are terribly hard to reject. My fate, however, is those choice I make (colored by my Wyrd) every day. Harry's Wyrd was mostly to be a manipulated boy, growing up in ignorance and forged to be a weapon against Voldemort and die valiantly.

Evil Dumbledore: Right now, think of most fanfic ways Dumbles has screwed Harry over and go with that.

Invictus is a short Victorian poem by the English poet William Ernest Henley (1849–1903). I think it fits Harry Potter pretty well.

Nemesis: Greek Goddess of "inexorable divine retribution" whose Roman name was Invidia. While often seen as a punisher of the wicked, she represent more the balanced scales where Fate meted out what was just to both the good and the evil. However Nemesis also was called to right wrongs that upset actions that seemed to insult the natural order of things.

Paladin of Nemesis: Back when Marvel Comics did one of their many reboots of the character Moon Knight, they had the character being an avenger for the Egyptian moon god Khonsu. He was referred to as 'the fist of Khonsu' and I always liked that sort of metaphor. It is an image that shows up a lot. Heck, the Tarna sequence at the end of the movie Heavy Metal has that same sort of imagery. So with Harry I'm going with that same sort of thing, "To defend: this is the pact. But when life loses its meaning and is taken for naught, then the pact is to avenge!"

Higher Magic and Currents of Life: A common theme in magic and in the life sciences is that there are natural rhythms in life that keep things from getting too far out of balance. For example, now that the ice caps and glaciers are melting, there is less ice to reflect heat back into space and the Earth heats up. This has happened quite a few times in Earth's history. Then, however, because there is more water not locked up in ice, eventually the cloud cover increases to the point where it is reflecting more sunlight (and heat) than before and the planet cools back down.

So too with magic. My take on magic goes along with the neo-pagan idea that magic is all about a focusing of will with the intent on affecting a change. You can manipulate things but only so far without consequences. It is why Dark Lords usually don't last. First, many of their magics 'insult' the natural order of things and over time the Higher Magics rebel against it. Second, like bad guys everywhere, after awhile a Hero eventually shows up to defeat them.

Dark Lord Harry: Harry is the forest fire that has to burn through to keep the forest healthy. It is sad that much of the forest has to burn but in terms of longevity for the forest as a whole, it is needed.

CHAPTER FOUR – OF THE BLOOD

GRINGOTTS, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – MORNING

Tonks was surprised when Harry come out of the floo as he had been doing it all his life. For someone as clumsy as she was, she had felt a bit of schadenfreude watching The-Boy-Who-Lived fall on his face every time he came out of the floo network. Not this time, Tonks noticed, since Harry didn't even seem to notice the transition.

Something was definitely up with the teen beyond the fact that he'd put Lord Draco Malfoy-Black into the Hogwarts infirmary for almost three days and Madam Pomfrey had to treat Victor Crabbe for ruptured testicles and Gregory Goyle for a nasty concussion. Tonks had to hand it to Harry; when he got pissed off he certainly didn't fuck around!

Of course since he had attacked another head of an Ancient and Noble House, she had a bad feeling about today. About the only good thing going was that it was at Gringotts. If the proceedings had been at the Ministry, Tonks would have bet her next ten paychecks that it would be just a dodge to get Harry there so they could have another kangaroo court like they did last year over that dementor attack. Lucius Malfoy might be in Azkaban but he still had plenty of cronies in the Wizengamot who would cheerfully vote to send Harry off to his godfather's old cell.

Tonks had to admit that while she had a bad feeling about today, she was feeling rather...perky. If she had her druthers she'd almost think she was downright horny. Sure it had been awhile since she had gotten some. Being a metamorphagus just meant no one seemed to want to fuck her as herself. It was always, "Can you look like this?" or "I've always wanted to fuck Princess Diana!" or some shit like that. However it hadn't been that long ago but Tonks kept feeling like she was in the middle of a date going well when you just felt that tonight you might get lucky. She wasn't sure why but the feeling had started at Hogwarts and hadn't gone away.

Tonks shook her head and realized that Harry had already walked up to the teller so she hastened to catch up with him. Last thing they needed today was Harry to insult some goblin and really have things go all pear shape! Yet by the time she got to his side, the teller had already bowed low and scurried off into a side office.

"Wow, Harry! I haven't seen a goblin move that fast since Sturgis Podmore's galleon bag ripped and coins went everywhere." Tonks joked.

Harry turned to her and gave her a tight smile. He liked Tonks but right now her cheerfulness was getting on his nerves. Oh she was still the good-looking woman that used to get him thinking dirty thoughts last year when she'd come over while they were cleaning Grimmauld Place. That she was a metamorphagus added a bit more spice to those fantasies to be sure. Right now, though, Harry really wasn't in the mood for all of her spunky personality. He had to face down Draco and right now Harry had to try to figure out if there was a way to become Lord Black or at least keep Malfoy from fully assuming all the rights due the House of Black.

His thoughts were interrupted when the first goblin returned followed by another. Harry's tight smile turned to one of genuine warmth. The teller had said he would bring the goblin who was working on most of the arrangements for today even though Director Ragnok would be the one to officiate it. Harry recognized the goblin as Griphook; the first goblin he really got to talk to.

Harry gave a small bow, "I greet you, honored Griphook and I am pleased we meet to do profitable business together. May your gold grow and your enemies falter."

Both Tonks and Griphook were surprised by this. Tonks because like most Magicals sort of ignored the goblins and so was surprised that Harry was being so polite. Griphook, on the other hand, was pleasantly surprised to not only be recognized but greeted in the proper goblin manner.

"I greet you, Harry Potter. I too am pleased that again we meet to do profitable business. May your House expand and your enemies wither." Griphook replied with a bow of his own.

Harry gave a small chuckle, "If my enemies wither today it will mostly be due to the help of the Goblin Nation. From what I know of today's proceedings, the Ministry is at a loss to explain it so I must put my trust in the instincts which sniff out profit through fire and fog."

Griphook struggled not to blink in surprise. How had this wizard heard of about sniffing profit through fire and fog? It was an old formal saying and one Griphook had never heard spoken in the human tongue. So few humans spoke the goblin language and fewer still spoke it well. It grated on the goblins to hear their native tongue of Ghob'lay Khohk, which literally meant voice of the goblins, be reduced to the human's Gobbledygook. This was made even more irritating considering what the Muggle meaning of that word was. Where had this human learned of this?

Harry waited patiently for Griphook to recover. He didn't want to goblin to lose face by having to admit that Harry had thrown him for a loop. Harry had to say while having to 'remember' a lot of the nastier stuff Voldemort had done in his life, it did come in handy when he could tap knowledge like goblin culture and a bit of their language. He doubted that Draco knew anything or be willing to use if he knew considering how his family treated their house elves. Harry knew if he was to succeed today it would be by cultivating allies. Considering how most everything Harry had learned about goblins from Binns and the Wizarding world in general was negative made him think they were just the types of allies he wanted.

Griphook motioned for Harry to follow him. "This way, if you please. Director Ragnok would like a private word before the meeting starts."

Harry bowed again before following the goblin. "I would be honored for what ever precious time Director Ragnok graciously spends upon me and will strive not to waste it."

Again Griphook fought to keep the surprise off his face. This boy seemed to know all the right pleasantries of goblin culture. Where had he learned of it? Griphook couldn't help but wonder if he was the one of legend, the wizard goblin prophecies had foretold of long ago. As he led the two to a private room, he shook his head at his own foolishness. Cynical goblins for generations had looked on that prophecy as a mere tale told to children. It brought no gold into one's coffers or food onto one's table.

Griphook led them down a long hallway to a door flanked by two goblins in traditional armor. Neither of the guards seemed to even blink when Griphook opened the door to the private chamber and bowed Harry inside. When Tonks tried to follow, the goblin held up a

hand and gave the pink-haired auror a look she had no difficulty translating. She wasn't offended. Gringotts was goblin territory and aurors were trained to know what they could or couldn't do. She walked up to the door and then paced back the traditional seven steps and settled down to wait. The goblin guards seemed to relax at the respect for their cultural secrecy traditions.

Inside the room, Harry found a goblin seated behind a desk that would make a Muggle CEO envious. The goblin himself might barely be chest high compared to the teen but Harry could easily feel that this goblin was a pure predator. If galleons were gazelles, Director Ragnok was a lion. Again Harry bowed low, "Director Ragnok, you honor me beyond my worth."

Director Ragnok gave a slight smile, "That, Harry Potter remains to be seen. Not all wealth is in galleons. I am looking forward to today. Inheritance is a blood sport we goblins always enjoy. However, you are here for a different reason."

To say Harry was surprised when Director Ragnok stood and came around his desk would have been an understatement. That he was thunderstruck when the goblin knelt and hung his head in what Harry knew was a position of 'ritual shame' would be holding his amazement cheap.

"To you, Harry Potter, last of the blood of the Ancient and Noble House of Potter, I, Ragnok, son of Dolmek, entrusted with the gold of my clan do give you my abject apology as well as that of our people for our failure. With the deaths of your parents and your grandparents, it was the Goblin Nation that your family had set to guard their House till you could arise and take your ring and become Lord Potter. We failed. We would not insult you or shame ourselves further in your eyes by giving excuses. In battle there are the victors and the are the fallen. In regards to your House, it is we who were left on the battlefield and your once proud House as well. Know that the previous supervisor fed himself to our dragon; his shame was too great."

Harry looked down upon the goblin and knew he was seeing something that no human had probably seen in centuries. He was a bit unsure what to do. He finally drew a deep breath, "Director Ragnok, I accept your apology and that of your people. I don't know the words to tell how I feel about all of this because I have only

recently found it out myself. What I can say is that I do not blame the Goblin Nation. I have been at the center of a plots and plans that go back to before I was born. I am still unraveling it all. I accept that your kin did their best and it wasn't enough. If anything I feel I should apologize to you and your people for once again wizards have shown they bargain in bad faith."

Ragnok looked up with an odd look on his face for a goblin. What it meant, Harry wasn't sure but what ever it was it passed and the director rose. Harry put out his hands. "I know that goblins do not shake hands. However I was taught that when two shake on something that cannot be helped, both parties accept it and they move on."

Director Ragnok gave a Harry a long, searching look until he finally seemed satisfied in what he found in Harry's eyes. He took Harry's hand and shook it firmly. "Well said, young lordling. Crying over lost accounts brings no profits back. However, if you should need aid at some future time I would be agreeable to hearing of it."

Harry gave another small bow, "Again you honor me. I am sure my family knew the risks when entrusting you with our family fortune. 'Defeat is the outcome rarely planned for' as Merlin once said to the great King Arthur. That you feel the need to grant me a future favor tells me there is more going on than business gone badly." Harry's eye's seemed to practically glow and his aura seemed to cool the room. "From what I have learned of late, I am sure we both know how true that is."

Ragnok rubbed his chin, "Yes that is true. Sometimes it is a wonder we can make any profit at all with you wizards playing your games. Well, young lordling, I must prepare for the meeting. I leave you with Griphook. He is the current supervisor of the Black account. He can answer any questions you have before the meeting."

Harry nodded and turned and walked out without another word. He was glad he knew that goblins truly lived by 'time is money' so they didn't like much of the social pleasantries. Plus, he was the one of director of the largest Gringotts branch in Britain. He had more profitable uses of his time than chatting up with a teen wizard.

He saw that Tonks brightened up when he opened the door. Harry knew she had probably been worried he would step on his dick or

something. Without Voldemort's memories Harry had to admit the very real possibility that's exactly what would have happened. He followed Griphook who had motioned for the two to follow him.

"So, what was that all about?" Tonks asked.

Harry gave her his best lop-sided grin, "You wouldn't believe me if I told you. No, really because I almost don't believe it myself."

Tonks rolled her eyes. Teens! Of course she was only six years older than Harry since she had been in her seventh year during his first.

Griphook led them to a small room. "Auror Tonks, through that door is the main meeting room. I need to speak of business matters with Mr. Potter privately. The meeting will start presently so we shall not be long."

Tonks nodded and gave Harry a friendly punch to the shoulder. After she left, Griphook turned to Harry. "As I am sure Director Ragnok told you, I am currently the supervisor for the Black account after the previous one finally decided to retire."

Harry nodded and then got an evil glint in his eye, "He wouldn't have retired recently, say after the 5th or June or so?"

Griphook gave Harry a sour look, "Yes, it did seem to coincide with the accession of young Malfoy in his current status as Lord Malfoy-Black."

Harry gave the goblin a knowing look, "Considering how he treats his house elves, I'm thinking his manners regarding the goblins is little better."

Griphook gave a non-committal grunt, "It is not our place to comment on our clients. However your freeing of one of the Malfoy elves was greeted with some bit of pleasure when it became known to us."

"Supervisor Griphook, I realize our time is limited so I'll come straight to the point. Draco is not completely the new Lord Black. I have been told that my godfather named me his heir and I know I

too am descended from the Black line if only through my grandmother. So what is at issue here?"

Griphook gave a pleased grin. Too many clients wanted to talk about things that brought no profit. It was refreshing to meet a human that was direct and to the point. "There is little I can say. Know this, today Lord Malfoy-Black will meet any challengers to his title. If none can come forth with a better claim of blood, he will become Lord Black with all the titles and power due him he will be able to take on when he reaches his seventeenth birthday."

Harry nodded, "So between then and now, I need to figure out what is going on. Am I to be the only challenger?"

Griphook shrugged, "We have heard rumors some other houses might challenge the Malfoy claim. Ancient and Noble Houses have many links and only through a full inheritance test can it be fully know. The Ministry keeps these restricted against our advice. There is far too much gold moldering in ancient vaults that gathers no profit because of it. Whether any of them truly show today remains to be seen."

Harry felt like a cold wind went through his brain. He knew Griphook had just told him something important but he wasn't quite sure what it was. "I am surprised it is an issue. I thought the pure-bloods kept meticulous records."

The goblin grinned, "They do but the records say what the families want them to say. Pristine family trees usually hide many secrets."

Before Harry could ask Griphook to elaborate, a gong sounded. Griphook immediately stood. "Our time is over; we must not keep the director waiting."

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Harry wasn't bored but he was finding it hard to concentrate. Griphook had been right since there had been a few other supplicants who had tried to argue they had a better blood connection than Draco. It reminded Harry of something from Henry the V where both sides tried to figure out who had the best claim to the French crown. Just like when he had seen that film, Harry found all the comments on the topic tedious and boring. It sometimes

sounded like the arguments for how many angels could dance on the head of a pin.

Lucky for him he was seated in such a way where he wasn't staring down Draco. He wondered if the goblins had thoughtfully had done this or Draco had requested it. He snorted to himself; if a Malfoy had thought of that, it would have been his mother. Unlike her son, Harry could see Narcissa Malfoy easily. With her husband in Azkaban Harry was sure she was there to make sure her son didn't bollix things up. Harry sometimes wondered how Draco ended up in Slytherin since he wasn't very cunning and his ambition was tied to the fact he was born with money and power.

Harry grudgingly admitted that Narcissa was very easy on the eyes. She was very beautiful in her cold aloof way. Muggle women might stress about their looks after turning forty but at forty-one, Narcissa easily looked a decade younger. Of course Professor Dumbledore looked around 80 when he in fact was almost 150. True, McGonagall looked her age as if she was a Muggle but Harry had heard tales that she had taken the death of her husband, children and grandchild during the War very hard. The only thing odd about Narcissa was her hair had a large patch of white hair like that of her husband and son. It stood out against the rest of her raven black hair. It gave her an odd look which reminded Harry of a skunk which she certainly didn't smell anything like. Looking at the lush black color the rest of her hair made Harry wonder how much of his own hair color came from his Black grandmother.

Hearing Director Ragnok dismiss the last of the other Houses claims brought Harry back from looking at Narcissa. Harry found he hadn't been able to resist trying to use his aura at her. After Luna had told him about how she had cum every time Harry had orgasmed, he had wondered if his aura acted as a conduit of emotions. So he had thought of things he wouldn't mind doing to her and projected it at her via his aura. Harry was pretty sure it had some affect since he noticed the woman had often squirmed and looked at him oddly. Plus while her robes covered a lot, it looked like her nipples had gotten hard under her silken dress.

Harry had wanted to try it on Tonks as well but he was worried that his aura might have some weird affect on her metamorphagus abilities. Having her hair freak out or her getting a pig's snout during the meeting wasn't something he wanted to be party too on a

childish whim. Other than Draco, the only other person Harry knew at the proceedings was Percy Weasley.

Harry had ground his teeth when he had seen the ginger git. Luckily Percy barely acknowledged him and had dutifully been taking notes and answering certain questions regarding Ministry policy. Harry had been aghast to find that not only had Umbridge recovered but she was still an Under-Secretary in the Ministry. Apparently Percy was working for her now instead of Fudge. Harry had wondered if Percy had jumped ship so to speak after the fight at the Department of Mysteries since Fudge's political future then had been tenuous at best. Harry was pretty sure Fudge's influence at the Prophet had saved him. By having them paint Harry as a deranged and dangerous teen had probably distracted people enough to keep him from being sacked.

Draco, with the subtlety of a kick in the teeth, peevishly asked if things were finally complete and he could finally get on with becoming Lord Black? He looked like he was going to continue on his typical tirade when he suddenly stopped. Harry had to grin because from the look on Draco's face it seemed to Harry that his mother had kicked Draco under the table.

Director Ragnok acted as Draco hadn't spoken. He said he was going to look through his notes to be sure if he hadn't missed anything and then he would give the formal last call for challenges. Harry had already stated his case earlier in the proceedings and has his claim dismissed. The formal last call would be his last chance.

Harry was a bit panicked. There had been nothing in the proceedings that had helped Harry. He noticed that Percy was giving him a smug look before going back to finishing up his notes. Harry thought how he looked like an accountant from Grunnings that Uncle Vernon had over for a barbecue with some others from his office he had been trying to suck up too. Harry wanted to reach across the table and shove Percy's quill up his arse and club him with his satchel. Unlike an accountant, Percy didn't seem to rate a briefcase...

Harry almost stood up as an almost electrical jolt went through him. Tonks looked at him with a questioning eye at his sudden jerk but he ignored her. He had just gotten the answer, he knew it! Unfortunately he didn't quite know what it was. Accountant...Percy...

ginger git...Ron! That's was it! On Harry's first train ride to Hogwarts Ron had said something about how he had a second cousin who was a squib and that he was an accountant!

Squibs! Harry hadn't met many except for Figg and Filch but he knew they didn't rate very high above Muggles in society. Harry knew most left for the Muggle world and quite a few were actually disowned for bringing shame to the bloodline like it was their fault they didn't have enough magic to be a wizard.

Harry looked at Ragnok; he almost looked finished with his review. Harry had to think! What was it that Griphook had said? Ancient Houses having secrets and that many family trees weren't what they seemed. How did that relate to Harry? His line was very meticulously mapped out.

Ragnok cleared his throat. "I have reviewed my notes. As has been put forth, none of the challengers has a claim worthy of being recognized. The strongest claim is that through the Potter line with the late Lord Sirius Black designating Harry Potter as his heir. However, the paternal line of Pollux Black supersedes that of the maternal line of Dorea Black. Supervisor Griphook will now call each claimant from least claim to best. You must either accept the ruling or challenge again. However, remember the penalties for a frivolous challenge." The goblin guards in the room seemed to perk up at the last bit. It was obvious they were hoping for someone to make a frivolous challenge!

Griphook started calling the names to which the previous claimants declared they would accept the ruling. Harry didn't have much time till his name was called. What was it about Squibs that felt right? Harry looked down at the lineage chart of the Potter line he had been given and noted that a Potter had never married a Squib. They married Muggleborns quite often and even a Muggle or two, but no Squibs. Of course if most Squibs had Filch's attitude, Harry could see why. Filch reminded him way to much of his Aunt Petunia...

"Harry Potter, do you accede or challenge?" Griphook called out.

Harry stood, partly because he was expected to but also because he thought he had the answer, but how to prove it?

"Harry Potter, do you accede or challenge?" Griphook repeated.

Harry racked his brain but nothing was forthcoming.

"Potty, give it up! This isn't Hogwarts and the Headmaster isn't here to help you," Draco said with a sneer.

Director Ragnok rapped his gavel which looked like it was carved from a bone of some animal Harry was sure had not given it up easily. "Silence!"

Griphook looked to Harry for a response. In that instant the goblin seemed to raise an eyebrow a bit and give a smile so small Harry wasn't quite sure it was there.

Harry suddenly felt like Archimedes and wanted to shout out, 'Eureka' but instead he simply said formally, "I, Harry Potter of the House of Potter contest Draco Malfoy's claim to the Ancient and Noble House of Black."

An almost unanimous cry of 'What?' rang out. Draco was on his feet crying, "What nonsense is this? I demand..." before his mother's death-grip on his arm shut him up.

After Director Ragnok banged his gavel to silence everyone, Griphook asked, "Harry Potter, how shall you prove your challenge?"

Finally some of Voldemort's memories were going to help. "Supervisor Griphook, I challenge Draco Malfoy's claim by blood. I contest that I have more of the blood of the Ancient and Noble House than Black than he does."

Derrick Flint, the representative of the House Flint, was a stocky man and he seemed to be trying to use that bulk to seem more imposing as he stood, "This is outrageous! This boy's blood is well documented!"

Director Ragnok looked to Harry, "Your answer?"

Harry took a deep breath, "Director Ragnok, I do not dispute the bloodline through House Potter. I am challenging because half of my bloodline is unknown."

Draco Malfoy sneered, "Your mother was a mudblood. End of story." Narcissa again tried to quiet him but he continued. "Director Ragnok, I formally asked that we end this farce. Declare me Lord Black and you can go back to counting galleons."

Harry wasn't the only one in the room who took a swift intake of breath at the sheer gall and arrogance of the young Malfoy. Even Narcissa seemed to shrink away from him as if he was suddenly infected with Dragonpox.

Surprisingly Director Ragnok went on as if Draco hadn't said a word. "Very well, Harry Potter, then will you submit to the blood inheritance test?"

Percy Weasley was suddenly on his feet, "I object! That test is proscribed by the Ministry and can only be given after special permission by the Wizengamot."

If Draco's outburst failed to get a respond, Percy's certainly made up for it. Ragnok visibly bristled and Harry noted his right hand dropped to his side where his ceremonial dagger was. Percy paled and looked like he might wet his trousers.

"The Ministry has no say in this! By treaty, inheritance laws are our responsibilities, human! It is bad enough they limit when we can administer this test. In this case Harry Potter is well within his rights to demand it to satisfy his challenge and we to administer it. If the Ministry wishes not to honor their treaty obligations, I assure you the Goblin Nation is ready to respond to such actions!"

Worried looks appeared on almost every face in the room. While Binn's class was boring, some of the goblin battles were interesting in that blood-thirsty sort of way. Harry had often wondered about some of the things he had been taught considering how he was taught how the goblins always lost yet seemed to always gain concessions. From the looks around the room Harry had to wonder who truly won the last goblin rebellion.

Percy certainly didn't want to be the wizard responsible for setting off another war so with an audible gulp he sat down. His rudeness and arrogance towards the goblins was just another black mark against him in Harry's book. That he was working for Umbridge made it even more worse.

Two goblins came out a side door and brought out a large blank piece of parchment the size of a typical Muggle roadmap. Griphook motioned him over. The goblins laid the parchment on the table. Griphook pulled out his ceremonial dagger and with his other hand gestured for Harry to give him his right hand. With a surgical swipe, Griphook slice his palm causing blood to drip onto the parchment. Harry was careful not to cry out or show pain. To do so would be seen as weakness in the eyes of the goblins. Looking down Harry was surprised to see the blood was being absorbed into the parchment almost the same way ink had been with Riddle's diary.

After a bit Griphook gave Harry a small crystal. After Harry grasped it, his cut healed. For a moment the room was quiet as they all waited. Suddenly an image began to form on the parchment out of the blood. It quickly cleared into an inverted lineage chart with Harry at the top. He noticed he was listed as Harold James Potter. Was that his real name? Back in primary school kids would some times ask what Harry stood for but he had always assumed his name was just Harry. It felt weird to find out something as fundamental as one's name wasn't what one thought it was. Odd that no one in the Wizarding world had ever asked him about his name.

He saw each name had a notation which showed if the person was a magical, Squib or Muggle. He was surprised to find that his Aunt Petunia was a squib. However what was more surprising was that both his maternal grandparents where Squibs! Looking a bit farther Harry found what he was looking for: Harry's maternal great-great grandmother had been Isla Black. He remembered Sirius telling him that she had ran off to marry a Muggle which was why her spot on the Black portrait had been blasted off.

As Harry noted that as soon as one trace reached Isla Black it stopped. However the lineage of her Muggle husband continued for many generations, often with Squibs till it ended with a witch named Igraine Peverell. Harry guessed the test was to determine just up to the last magical in a line of the line in question. Considering how interbred many of the House were, Harry figured one would need some sort of 3-D hologram out of Dr. Who to fully see who Harry was fully related to.

Harry breathed out a sigh of relief. He had done it! As much of the immediate need was to keep Draco from becoming Lord Black,

Harry also felt that to let that happen would be like another failure of Harry's regarding his godfather. Making a mistake due to not knowing the facts and thus putting Sirius into the danger that ultimately killed him was something Harry was just now beginning to accept as not his fault. Letting Malfoy take over House Black, however, was unthinkable.

Griphook took the parchment over to Director Ragnok who reviewed it. The air in the room was tense since none could really see it other than Harry. The look on his face, however, gave enough of a clue of how relieved he was. The room was filled with badly contained whispers. Draco, on the other hand, looked like he was going to explode.

Ragnok reviewed the parchment for a minute or two and then rapped his gavel. "I have reviewed the test of the blood. In this I accept Harry Potter's challenge against Draco Malfoy. In light of the additional blood relationship to Isla Black via his maternal line, I rule in favor of the challenge."

In light of the uproar this cause among the other claimants, Harry was surprised that it was Narcissa who calmly rose and gave a half-bow to Ragnok, "Honored Director, I feel I must dispute this ruling. Isla Black was cast out of the House of Black when she refused the marriage contract she was under in order to marry a Muggle. Thus I contend she is not eligible to be used in this case."

Many of the others like Flint nodded at Narcissa's reasoning and Harry noted that Draco had gotten back his traditional look of superiority. It was typical of him; he never did anything himself. It was always his parents or his flunkies. Harry wondered if Crabbe and Goyle wiped his ass for him.

Ragnok, however, shook his head, "Lady Malfoy, this is a test of blood for the House. Disinherited or not it does not matter. Only the blood ties matter. In this matter, Harry Potter has more of the blood of the Ancient and Noble House of Black. Therefore by the terms of the treaty of which such matters were outlined, I must rule against your son's claim."

Derrick Flint was again on his feet, "This is ludicrous! If someone is cast out of a family, they are no longer of that family. Their blood might as well as be muddy Muggle blood!"

Ragnok raised an eyebrow, "Be that as it may be, but the treaty does not specify that."

Flint sputtered, "Why should it? It's common sense if someone is disinherited that they are no longer part of that family!"

Ragnok gave a long, evil chuckle, "Common sense or not, it is not stated that way in the treaty. Come Lord Flint, you should know if it isn't written down in the contract or treaty you sign with goblins than it doesn't exist."

Both Flint and Narcissa blinked at this and their faces fell. Harry almost laughed as Draco's face had slid from his look of victory to tasting the bitterness to being bested by Harry...again. He might have kept himself from laughing but he wasn't about to let Draco get away without seeing his wide grin of triumph.

Ragnok stood and everyone in the room quickly followed suit. "Since Harry Potter has successfully challenged, I adjudicate him to be the new Lord Black. Since he has no living relatives closer than two degrees, I declare him emancipated and able to take up his duties forthwith."

Percy looked like he was going to speak but quickly thought better of it when the few goblin guards in the room seemed to look his way with evil grins of anticipation of him putting his foot in his mouth which they obviously hoped meant they would get to have a beating.

Griphook motioned for Harry to go the Director. "Harry Potter, do you, by the right of the blood in your veins accept the rights and responsibilities to the Ancient House of Black?"

Harry squared his shoulders, "Director Ragnok, by the right of my blood in my veins, I do."

There was a flash of his aura and Harry noticed that the Black family ring was now on his finger. A part of his mind realized it was a good thing that Sirius wasn't wearing it when he disappeared into the Veil.

Ragnok continued, "Now that you are an adult, the restrictions that were put on House Potter under...questionable circumstances are

void. Do you so accept your lineage and take up the mantle of your birth House, Harry Potter?"

Harry thought of the wreck of what was once the proud House Potter and felt somehow ashamed. It hadn't been his fault but somehow he felt like he had let his ancestors down. He would make it right and the guilty would pay. "I do accept my lineage and will take up the mantle of my House, Director Ragnok."

Again his magic flared and his Black ring was replaced by the Potter ring. At the look on his face, Ragnok smiled and said to him sotto voice, "You can summon which ever ring you wish just by thinking of it."

Ragnok was about to continue when a slight commotion interrupted them. Certainly the room was still filled with the whisperings as people struggled to see how this would affect Wizarding politics. Harry had already seen a reporter break a quill he was writing so fast. The commotion centered on the Malfoys. Draco seemed to be talking to his mother who was looking lost and dazed and was rubbing her left hand as if it was in pain. She looked somehow different and it suddenly struck Harry that the odd white patch of hair was gone and all of her hair was now the same lush black color.

Ragnok gave a shrug, "Lord Potter-Black, your challenge has brought forth another matter. Through your father's line you have the blood of Ignotus Peverell. Now we find that through your mother you are descended from the daughter of his brother Cadmus Peverell. The test would not have shown this unless it was to show you are the last heir to that line. It was a Noble House that came to a tragic end and their vaults have been dark for centuries. As your right by blood, will you take up the Noble House of Peverell?"

Harry blinked at this. The name was sort of familiar. He seemed to remember something about a scepter that could judge truth or something like that. Binns made even interesting historical things boring. Known or not, Griphook's earlier comment about lots of galleons sitting in dark vaults now made sense. He'd take on the House if only to score more points with the goblins. "As is my right by blood, I do so accept."

His aura flashed a third time but this time it seemed more powerful as if the Peverell family magic was eager to be used again. Harry

felt a bit flushed. On top of what he had gained from having his magical core unbound, he now felt like he could duel Dumbledore himself. He had done it! He had gained his titles, was emancipated and had kept Draco from getting hands on the Black fortune and its dark secrets. Plus Harry felt that he had made a good start with the goblins.

Maybe his ancestors wouldn't be ashamed of him after all.

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A/N Notes:

McGonagall: Yes, I know in canon she's actually around 71 since her birthday is given to be around 1925. However I need her a bit younger for reasons that will become apparent.

Harold Potter: There is a symbolic reason for this. Be patient, all will be revealed.

CHAPTER FOUR – BAD FAITH

GRINGOTTS, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – MID-MORNING

Narcissa Malfoy had a guilty secret: she liked to watch Muggle movies. With Lucius often away on business she was frequently alone. Every bit the controlling bastard, her husband was jealous of even the hint of adultery or something which would reflect badly on his social position so he monitored practically everyone she met. Other lonely aristocratic wives could get together for tea or maybe a 'girl's night out' which meant they could have some girl-sex like they might have had back at school. Due to Lucius manipulations, Narcissa could only make it to planned events with multiple women which tended to be crushingly boring events. No hanky-panky ever happened at these staid meetings. Certainly she got to play her political games during these times but it didn't scratch her inner yearnings. This left her a very frustrated woman.

Like typical rich lords Lucius, Narcissa knew, was often out whoring. Although 'whoring' might not be the correct term because she had gotten whiffs of some ugly rumors. She had often heard the twittering gossip of witches which always stopped cold when they became aware of her. From this Narcissa had realized that perhaps the reason her husband almost never touched her, regardless of her noted beauty, was that he was more interested in boys. Worse, those same rumors had hinted that like father, like son. She had put so much of herself into trying to shape Draco into a worthy heir to the Malfoy and Black legacy and had failed miserably.

As the years Draco attended Hogwarts went by, she began to realize her failure was less her own and more due to the influence of Lucius who had filled Draco's head with nonsense. Draco hung on his father's tales of Lucius' life being rich, powerful and a feared Death Eater. Draco already acted as if that power was already his if the stories Narcissa heard coming out of Hogwarts were true. The brutal truth was for all his riches and power Lucius was nothing more than a branded slave to an inhuman monster. This reality ate at her constantly. Lucius had done more with gold and intrigue to gain control of magical Britain than Voldemort had ever gotten close to through fear and violence. That her husband's successes were because of plans Narcissa had crafted ate at her even more.

Thus Narcissa was often alone, bitter and sexually frustrated. When looking in the mirror, she saw a woman most wizards dreamed of. She was sure if naked pictures of her somehow made it into Hogwarts most of the teen wizards would be shooting their loads while lusting after her in their dirty fantasies. These thoughts often cheered her as she played with herself alone in her bed or bath. The thought of dancing before all those virile boys who couldn't help but jack off and cum all over her was a favorite fantasy of hers. Fantasy was all she had. Thus she often snuck out alone into the Muggle world to feed her fantasies at the cinema.

She marveled that Lucius had never caught her. Of course dallying with a Muggle was something Narcissa would not contemplate no matter how horny she was. Narcissa had to admit that he probably knew that about her and knew of her secret trips as well. Lucius surely saw her love of movies as a harmless release for her which would keep her from killing herself. This was one of the more common ways witches died but one rarely acknowledged. Knowing her husband like she did, Narcissa felt Lucius probably bragged to his friends how he 'allowed' his wife her little release while still being in control of her.

It was a release without which she would probably crack. She loved to watch romantic films, films of far-off places and fanciful stories. She would often go to 'art-house' films to see not only the newest independent films but newly restored classic films. It was from one of those restored films that gave her a metaphor for how she was feeling after the decisions regarding the Ancient and Noble House of Black and Potter were read.

She felt as if a house had dropped on her from out of nowhere. To make matters worse, someone had stolen her ruby slippers.

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Harry couldn't help but feel a bit sorry for Narcissa Malfoy. For a woman whose whole attitude screamed polish and poise, she was obviously quite shaken by the events of the day. It had not helped that Draco had been his typical arrogant self and made himself an obnoxious pest to both goblin and human alike. Without the calming (or controlling) influence of his mother, Draco had finally stomped out of the bank with his typical comments like "This isn't over, Potter"

and "Wait till my father hears of this!"

Harry had to admit he found the first comment stupid since Director Ragnok's decision might as well be inscribed on a stone tablet from God for all the chance Draco had to reverse the decision. The other comment made Harry laugh since Draco seemed to have completely forgotten that his father was still in a cell in Azkaban. Harry wondered if Draco could be any more of a cliché vaudevillian bad guy wannabe. All he really lacked was a mustache to finger or maybe a cat to pet like some James Bond villain.

Griphook cleared his throat which brought Harry out of his thoughts. "Now that young Malfoy has gone, perhaps we could get back to our discussion?" The goblin said with a bit of a sneer.

Narcissa gave a weak nod. She kept playing with her left hand, fingering where her wedding ring had been. Apparently from what Draco had said prior to him leaving, the ring seemed to have burned his mother right after Harry had taken on the mantle of Lord Potter and she so had to take it off. It explained the commotion at the time but Harry still wondered why her hair had gone back to being all black. Where had that white patch gone?

Griphook looked at his notes before speaking. "I will be brief as Wizarding history is not our responsibility. However in light of Lord Black's lack of grounding in Wizarding history, I will give a quick summation of the relevant points."

Griphook looked at Harry. "During the times of the Romans, Christianity was brought to these isles. At first this wasn't a problem but as more and more wizards took on the new religion, they started to look down on the old ways and many of the older rituals. Many families saw this trend as alarming, especially considering how Muggle Christians were wiping out pagans elsewhere, both Muggle and magical."

"To deal with this, two sons of the Potter clan came forward with a plan to handle this problem. In the north Coburn Potter made contact with many Wizarding families in Scandinavia. Coburn Potter had many contacts going back to when the Vikings held sway over the lands north of the Dane Law. Principle among these was Jarl Harald Harada and his chief shield brother Ivar Longbottom who felt

that the island of Britain would make it easier to defend if things continued to go poorly for followers of the Old Ways. So together they devised a plan to immigrate in mass to Britain. Many of my kin also decided to accompany this exodus," Griphook said.

"To the south, his cousin Henry Potter contacted a group of Norman wizards who also felt that too many Magicals were learning the wrong lessons from Christianity and by allying with Rome would lead to problems with the Muggles. Henry had been working with the Muggle king, Edward the Confessor, but had little to show for his efforts until the king died and Harold the Second became king. He is known to Muggles as Harold Godwinson but he was actually a wizard of the Godric line. Harold Godricson agreed with Henry Potter's plan. While a magical, Harold felt it was better that wizards act behind the scenes in an advisory role. Harold and Henry's plan was similar to what would become the basis of the Statue of Secrecy much later." Griphook read from his notes.

Harry was fascinated by this! How come Binns never taught any of this? Was this information being deliberately being suppressed at Hogwarts?

Griphook looked at Harry. "Your ancestors knew that they couldn't just bring in wizards because there were many Muggles who knew of magic and they would be just as important as the wizards. However the native Muggles of Britain wouldn't simply accept them showing up on their shores. So Harold Godricson waited till his subject's spoke of an invasion of their shores and he quickly marched north. Then at the battle of Stamford Bridge, he broke the invaders and sent them back into the sea. This battle was, of course, faked with plenty of Muggles charmed to spread the story. Thus the new immigrants, if asked, would say they had survived the battle and had sworn loyalty oaths to the King in order to stay. This made Harold's subjects happy about their king's prowess in battle and thus didn't realize they had been tricked. Thus the news of a successful defeat of an invasion and breaking of their army would give a plausible excuse for the new immigrants or at least distract the Muggles from asking too many questions."

"This is interesting but what has this to do with me?" Narcissa asked.

Griphook gave an airy gesture, "Patience Ms. Black, I'm coming to that." Both Harry and Narcissa noted that the goblin hadn't called her Lady Malfoy.

Griphook went back to his reading. "Harold then marched south to combat another 'invasion' by the Normans. Henry Potter, the Royal brewer and head of House Potter, had made contact with many Norman wizards just as his cousin Coburn had done. The plan was mostly the same except William the Conqueror was to 'defeat' Harold. This would allow William to become King and Harold would become his chief advisor. Thus a Magical would be the chief advisor to the king again just as Merlin had been to King Arthur."

Griphook looked to Narcissa, "Does the name Hadrian Cauchon sound familiar to you?"

Narcissa thought about it. She was a political animal and she knew the ins and outs of most family trees in England. She knew of a House Cauchon in southern France but they had been wiped out in the Muggle Albigenian Crusade in 1223. She had never heard of any of that House coming to Britain. After a moment she had to shake her head.

Griphook gave a nasty smile, "I thought not. The tale has been suppressed and history written to hide it. Hadrian Cauchon was a younger son of a large, influential family in France. He had gathered many families to move to England. He had told Henry they were worried about the Church's growing power. He was the one that broached the idea to William on Henry's behalf. Thus it came to pass that the 'invading' French army faced down Harold's army which had marched down from their 'battle' at Stamford Hill."

Harry interrupted, "This was the battle of Hastings, right?" Harry remembered learning about it during primary school.

Griphook nodded, "An important battle to Muggle England but even more for magical Britain. As the battle was joined, Harold quickly realized that the French were actually fighting. He quickly called for a parley. Harold was met by Hadrian and his allies, the Bulstrodes, Rosiers and LeStranges to name a few. William had remained with the troops, ready to attack again at a moments notice."

Harry didn't like the sound of that. It smelled like a set-up to him.

"Harold demanded to know what was going on but it became apparent that Hadrian had betrayed him. He had used charms on William to accept his plan and most of the Muggles were there to 'convert the heathens' because Hadrian planned to use them to wipe out any magical opponents who wouldn't agree to the new order of things. Harold realized then that the Magicals who followed Hadrian were all ambitious, lesser houses or wizards disgraced in some way. They hoped to make a fresh start in England. Harold and his party barely made it back to their lines but Harold was wounded and many of his generals slain after the French wizards attacked them."

Griphook looked up from his notes. "William attacked again and Harold, weakened by the duel with Hadrian and his cronies eventually was struck down by an arrow. However, before he died he cast a terrible curse. With all his remaining magic and those due him as the true king of England, he cursed Hadrian and all of his line. This caused all of those in Hadrian's line by blood or marriage to have white hair to mark them as traitors and the only family name that magical documents would ever accept would be that of bad faith."

"Malfoy," Narcissa gasped. Suddenly she understood certain odd bits of Malfoy family secrets she had learned over the years. Things that never fully added up. Now she realized it had been due to a deliberate cover-up.

Griphook nodded. "Exactly. William became king and Hadrian Cauchon, now Malfoy made good on his plan to attack the current order. Many lines were grievously hurt in the magical civil war which followed. In the north, Harald Harada married Coburn Potter's daughter and had a son prior to being killed fighting against Hadrian's allies. Before his death, he too cursed Hadrian Malfoy for being an oath-breaker. To those of the north, there is no worse shame than being labeled a warlock. He pledged his line would never stop fighting those of House Malfoy."

"Before London was taken, Harold Godricson's only daughter escaped and eventually married one of Henry Potter's sons. Henry and his own allies were able to fight off attacks against his house. Eventually the war stalemated after years of bloody fighting and so your Wizengamot was born, filled with new and old Houses to bring about an uneasy peace. Later, the line from Harald's son would marry into the line from Harold's daughter. Thus the Potter line is

connected to the curses that both King Harold and Jarl Harald uttered as they lay dying."

Harry suddenly understood. "Of course! When I became Lord Black, I assumed responsibilities for all Blacks, even ones married outside the family. Since Narcissa was married to Lucius Malfoy, the curse would automatically cancel the marriage contract because I am now Lord Potter as well as Lord Black. The Potter curse worked through my control of House Black!"

Comprehension dawned in Narcissa's eyes. "This also explains the hair. I started to get the white hair after I married Lucius. It was the curse starting to mark me as a Malfoy. I'm sure eventually all my hair would have turned white. I had always wondered why no magical or Muggle dye could ever cover it up." Her eyes dulled and she seemed to sag a bit. "So I am divorced from Lucius? I am Narcissa Black again?"

Griphook nodded, "Yes, you have been cast out from House Malfoy. You would probably suffer horribly if you tried to return to Malfoy Manor."

Narcissa looked sick. "What about my son? How does this affect him? Has he been disinherited from House Malfoy?"

Griphook shook his head, "No, he is still the legitimate son of Lucius Malfoy. The marriage was canceled magically. It was not annulled legally."

"What about my dowry? Am I penniless with nothing but the clothes on my back?" Narcissa asked.

Griphook sighed. "Again the divorce, if one can call it that, is due to a magical curse. While it is binding, it has no affects legally. Therefore while you could sue to have your dowry returned, I would doubt that your courts would hear the case. We goblins, certainly, would not rule in your favor."

"So I have nothing?" Narcissa exclaimed.

"Griphook shrugged. "That depends upon House Malfoy. With Lord Malfoy in Azkaban and Draco Malfoy still a minor, a regent will have to be determined from those with the closest blood ties. Then Lord

Black can negotiate with that regent for your personal effects. However before that happens it would be possible for your son to have your house elves bring you items. I caution you that they would have to truly be personal items. Without a regent's permission, very little would be considered yours and not something shared between husband and wife. Until then you are dependent on your Lord Black for protection and support."

Harry raised an eyebrow at this. He didn't think Draco was going to take it well that his own mother was dependent upon him. Harry looked forward to telling him! It would make up for Draco telling him about Sirius' will. Thinking of that reminded Harry of a few things.

"Griphook, there are some Black matters I need to ask about. What about Bellatrix and can I reinstate Andromeda Tonks back into the Black family?" Harry asked.

Griphook nodded, "Reinstating Andromeda Tonks only requires a magical oath on your part. Bellatrix LeStrange's case needs a bit of study. In the past the curse has actually affected some of the allies of the Malfoys. The Unspeakables have theorized that since Harold was the king, this strengthened his curse so it actually bled over onto those that followed Hadrian. So Bellatrix may also have also been divorced from the LeStrange family when you became Lord Potter. Regardless of that, casting her out of the Black family can be done with a magical oath stating it so."

Griphook stood and pulled a small bell from his vest and set it on the table. "Lord Black, there is much I need to do to attend to your affairs before you can depart. If you wish to be taken to your vaults, just ring this bell and one of my assistants will show you to them. Unfortunately the Potter vaults have been emptied. We managed to save many heirlooms through various means when it became apparent what was happening. We have them locked up in a very secure vault of our own and it will take a while to have them released. Would you like them moved to the Black or Peverell vaults?"

Harry thought about it, "I take it I should not use the Potter vault anymore?"

Griphook shook his head. "Not until you can defeat the cabal that broke your house. Until then we would not recommend using them."

"What about any properties? Grimmauld Place was under a Fidelius charm by a wizard whom I no longer trust. Can this be fixed?" Harry asked.

Griphook gave a shrug, "When you took over as Lord Black, the previous agreement by then Lord Sirius Black was broken. We goblins could recast the charm with a secret keeper of your choice, for a fee of course."

Harry gave a nod and a grin, "Of course, I would expect no less. When you return, I think I will take that option." Griphook gave a small bow and left through a side door. Harry got up and went through the main door. He found Tonks all but snoozing in a chair.

Tonks struggled to look awake, "Are you done in there Har...Lord Potter?"

Harry grimaced. "You can still call me Harry. However if there is some social protocol that requires you to call me by my title, call me Lord Black."

Tonks looked surprised. "Okay, if that is your want, but why Harry? You are a Potter!"

Harry's face grew impassive, "I am but there is very little left of House Potter and there are things I need to do that would be better done under the name of House Black." Harry was silent for a moment and Tonks felt as if Harry had forgotten she was still there. Harry finally looked up, "You might want to warn your parents I intend to reinstate your mother back into the Black family. I still need to talk to Narcissa about a few things before I go look at my vaults."

Tonks shook her head, "I'll let them know later. I am responsible for your safety so I'm sticking around till I get you back to Hogwarts."

Harry shrugged, "Fair enough. I would be the last one to tell you how to do your job. Again, I'll be in here awhile longer."

It was Tonks' turn to shrug, "No worries Harry. I've had worse stake-outs."

Harry gave a quick smile and closed the door and sat back down. He noticed that Narcissa seemed agitated. Harry guessed it had finally sunk in that she was totally dependent on him for the time being and she didn't like it. He knew he had to quickly make her understand the new reality and crush any hint that she had any power left.

"So, Narcissa, we seem to have a problem. You have nothing while I seem to have everything. You are the mother of someone I was sorely tempted to kill earlier this year as well as party to Voldemort and his Death Eaters. I'm sure you are also deep into the whole Pureblood movement which I find abhorrent. So this begs the question, why shouldn't I chuck you out into the streets to beg or starve?" Harry asked.

Narcissa practically hissed like a cat at this. "You talk big for a boy without a wand! If you weren't Lord Black I could have you dead before my niece would even realize you were in danger."

Harry gave a hearty laugh. "Narcissa, your boy made the same mistake about me. Your husband made the same mistake about me. Voldemort keeps making the same mistake. You all keep underestimating me. Even after I've defeated them time after time, you all keep acting like I'm some little Squib who doesn't know which end of a wand is which."

Harry leaned forward and Narcissa was caught in the powerful spell of his death-curse green gaze. "However you haven't had your chance yet so let's fix that. I don't have a wand and as Lord Black, I give you permission to use whatever spell you wish against me. Attack me, curse me, try to turn my hair pink, I don't care. Do your worst. If you are anything like Draco I will have to practically kill you to make you see I am not to be trifled with so let's get to it, shall we?"

Harry sat back and placed his hands palms downward on the table. Narcissa was wary of some sort of trap and so they just sat staring at each other for a moment. "If this is your idea of magic then I think you've gotten rusty as the pampered pet of Lucius," Harry finally said with a mocking sneer evident in his voice.

His tone seemed to ignite all the pent up anger and frustration in her. Years of humiliation came boiling out of her and she leapt to her feet

and drew her wand. A nasty curse taught to her by Grandmum Black was on her lips before the impossible happened! The table shot forward and knocked her back into her chair which promptly fell backwards. Instead of just hitting her head on the floor, she was catapulted into the air where she found herself helplessly spinning. The hand holding her wand suddenly felt like it was being crushed and she cried out, dropping her wand only to see it fly into Harry's waiting hand. She was violently jerked around facing him, still hovering about a foot off the floor.

Harry got up and walked over to where Narcissa floated helplessly. He traced the tip of her wand down one cheek and then the other before pointing the wand directly between her eyes. "Yes, right about there. That's where I was going to punch a hole the size of my fist through Draco's skull back on the Hogwarts Express before Hermione stopped me. You should really send her a thank you-card since because of her I only had my conjured snake bite the crap out of him."

Narcissa did all she could not to piss herself. Harry Potter wasn't even a fully mature wizard and here he was effortlessly keeping her afloat with wandless magic! How could he do this without showing any hint of the enormous strain this had to be? Narcissa had met Voldemort and felt the tug of his aura upon her but for all his power he was a mere candle to the bonfire that was standing so nonchalantly before her eyes. Through the fear that Harry was going to kill her, his aura affected her profoundly. Here was a wizard that exemplified power! She found herself getting wet and her nipples hardening as Harry's power held her helpless.

Harry gave an internal chuckle. Again he couldn't help but toy with her as he projected his sexual desires through his aura onto hers. He could easily see her hard nipples poking through her dress and he felt his own cock hardening in anticipation. Harry just needed to drive home the lesson before offering Narcissa the chance to keep herself from being thrown Knutless into Diagon Alley.

Harry lowered her wand and then began to trace it from a little below her throat down to just above her loins. "I told Draco and I'm going to tell you as well. Knowing Draco's inability to admit defeat you might have a ...distorted view of events at Hogwarts. In my first year I defeated Voldemort while he possessed Professor Quirrell. My second I killed the basilisk Lucius had hoped to kill the Muggleborns

with in Hogwarts. Did your husband tell you the real story of how I tricked Dobby away from him? My third year I drove away over a hundred dementors with my corporeal Patronus. I not only won the Tri-Wizard Tournament but defeated Voldemort again. Didn't Lucius tell you all about it? He was there to witness it all. I defeated another dementor ambush my fifth year and created my own secret group right under the nose of Umbridge and your son. It took a bitter girl's betrayal to catch me. Even then I got out of that in time to defeat your husband and eleven other Death Eaters with only five other students. Oh and not only did I defeat your husband and demented sister, I defeated Voldemort...again."

Harry had been randomly tapping Narcissa's wand over various parts of her body as he made each point. He noticed how she shivered when he brushed the tip across one of her hard nipples. Obviously Narcissa was a woman turned on by power, power that Harry was effortlessly showing.

He summoned Narcissa's chair and promptly dropped her into and sat himself back down in his own chair. With a wave of his hand, Harry pushed the table away. Nothing stood between the two now but an empty meter or two. He found Narcissa flushed and panting. Harry allowed himself a victorious smile; all his work on his aura to see how he could affect a witch certainly hadn't been time wasted.

"So Narcissa, we are back to where we started. Can you give me a good reason why I shouldn't just throw you out into a world you have looked down upon with lordly contempt from Malfoy Manor? Why shouldn't I force you to end up a waitress at the Three Broomsticks or a whore in Knockturn Alley? My lover has been pimped out since she was ten to wizards like Lucius and his Pureblood buddies so why shouldn't you get a taste of that? Come on Narcissa, what do you have that I might want?"

Harry's words hit Narcissa like a brick. He was right in that if he cast her out she'd probably be lucky to get a job as a high-priced call girl where she would end up servicing all the powerful men of the Wizarding world. Men she knew to be vile and often disgusting in their deviant desires. What did she have that Harry might need? What?

Harry could see reality crashing down upon the woman. He decided to give her a bit of a hint. "What service could you do for me,

Narcissa? Is being a beautiful woman all you've got? I'm sure that might come in handy after I throw you out unless you expect to me to keep you around just because you are easy on the eyes."

Narcissa gasped at this and humiliation brought a blush to her cheeks. Yet in his words might be the answer. She was beautiful and Harry was a teenager. She noticed that his legs were spread and it looked like he was sporting an erection. She could see his eyes lingering on her heaving bosom. Could she whore herself out to him to keep herself off the street? At first this thought repulsed her but her body quickly reminded her that she wanted him and wanted him badly.

She shakily rose and began to take off her dress; her robe had gone flying during their one-sided duel. As the dress and her undergarments hit the floor and she stood naked before him, she saw the frank appreciation in his eyes. This pleased her so she knelt before him and undid his trousers. She found his cock hard and seemingly eager in her hands. For such a wiry lad, his penis was rather thick and of a goodly length. It certainly was better than Lucius' long but slender dick. She sighed as the smell of his musk wafted up to her. She began to slowly stroke him to ensure he was fully erect. To her surprise he seemed to grow a bit harder and thicker.

Harry said softly with more than a hint of lust in his voice, "Yes, this is promising. I think you might be onto something here Narcissa. Show me you have talents and aren't just a gorgeous body with no skills." As Narcissa stroked him, Harry had her wand moving, casting a silent locking charm as well as a silence charm on the door. Narcissa knew she was truly alone and her fate depended on how well she could satisfy the lust of the new Lord Black.

Harry let out a long, satisfied sigh as Narcissa began to lick around the crown of his penis as she continued to slowly jerk him off. This sound provoked a wave of pleasure in Narcissa. She realized that it had literally been years since she had done this. In fact, she now realized she had had more sex at Hogwarts than she had had after she had married Lucius! This stunning realization seemed to light a fire in her as she realized that not only did she need to please Harry she wanted to.

Unknown to Narcissa, Harry could get a sense of what she was thinking. While eye contact helped, it was still quite easy to read her mind now that Narcissa began to suck Harry's cock down her throat. Harry hadn't realized how little love, affection and sex Narcissa had gotten after she had left school and been married off to Lucius. As he looked down as her luscious black-haired head bobbed up and down over his cock, Harry read out some of her tragic life. How Andromeda had refused to marry Rodolphus LeStrange and had run away to marry Nymphadora's dad Ted Tonks. How the marriage contract had fallen to Bellatrix which in turn made Narcissa have to fulfill Bellatrix's own contract to marry into House Malfoy. How Narcissa had actually liked the wizard she had been contracted to marry only to be forced to marry the loathsome Lucius Malfoy who gave her nothing but an empty bed and a churlish son.

Harry began to understand the passion Narcissa was lavishing upon his cock. She had years of sexual frustration begging to be released. Harry groaned as her tongue hit a sweet spot under the crown as he thought of the serendipity of him being a wellspring of sexual energy needing release as well. He knew he was going to be shagging Narcissa often and she'd enjoy every minute of it.

For Narcissa she felt like a virgin again, sucking off Damien Rosier under the moonlight in the Astronomy Tower back in her fifth year. She was wet and her nipples ached to be touched, pinched and even tortured. She took Harry's cock out of her mouth and rubbed it hard across her nipples, her other hand dropping down to find her slit wet and her clit engorged and sensitive in a way it had never been before. In moments she was crying out in orgasm as long pent-up desires flooded through her.

Harry watched all of this with wonder. He had been amazed at how passionate Luna had been as they explored each other's body. Here, however, was a witch who knew adult pleasures and had been denied them for far too long. Watching her cum was so erotic that he felt his own need to cum rising. He was torn between wanting to fuck Narcissa's wonderful breasts or have her return to gloriously sucking him off. Narcissa ended his internal debate by giving a satisfied sigh before again attacking his cock with her tongue before sucking his it back into her hot mouth.

Harry knew he wouldn't last long. Katie's taunt and tanned body had thrilled him. Luna's ethereal body had enchanted him but Narcissa's

full-bodied, adult curves tantalized him. She seemed to represent adult pleasures that teenage sex paled against. He wanted to delve into her body and unlock those adult pleasures. Before that, however, he had to cum and with a long moan he did just that.

Like Luna had learned before her, Narcissa found that Harry came a great deal and she was shocked when Harry's cock seemed to send spurt of spurt of his hot load down her throat. After three spurts she let his cock slip out of her mouth thinking he would be mostly spent only to have him continue to shoot over her face and tits. Narcissa was shocked! Lucius or even the boys at Hogwarts never came like this! She quickly returned to sucking up the last of his cum, secretly enjoying the feel of his hot spunk on her face and breasts. She couldn't help but think of her fantasies of men lusting after her and cumming all over her. For now, Harry by himself easily fulfilled her fantasy. She practically screamed in pleasure as Harry's aura flared as he came which sent a wave of energy through her making her cum like she hadn't done in years.

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Nymphadora was bored. While she knew how important Harry was to Dumbledore and the Order of the Phoenix it didn't mean she enjoyed waiting outside a closed door in one of the most secure places in magical Britain. No Death Eater would dare attack Harry here and the goblins weren't about to harm the teen who just unlocked the gold from a vault dark for hundreds of years. Yet here she was, stuck on guard duty. It was hardly anything like the glamorous life of an auror she had imagined when she was in her seventh year back at Hogwarts.

Bored as she was, she amused herself with idle daydreams. Her life hadn't been all that exciting of late except for that terrifying night when they had lost Sirius. So far Voldemort hadn't made any real major moves since his rebirth and certainly hadn't made a move since his defeat at the Department of Mysteries. Still she had been busy with patrolling, gathering info and shaking down informants for any hint of Voldemort's plans. It hadn't left time for many pints or a game of darts down at the pub. She had to really think about when was the last time she had had a decent shag. She realized she probably should start looking for one-night stands with Muggles since she was tired of wizards wanting her to look like someone else in bed.

Tonks suppressed a laugh. At least with Muggles she could shag a bloke and then come back the next week with a different face and shag him again if he was good enough the first time. It wasn't like a Muggles cock was any different than a wizards. It had crept up on her a bit while she thought about what was lacking in her love life but that previous sexual feeling had returned. Tonks suddenly found herself fondling a hard nipple through her blouse and was surprised to find her knickers damp with desire. What the hell was going on? She knew she was horny but this was getting out of hand!

She got up and did a quick check up and down the corridor. Not a goblin to be seen or the few humans that worked for Gringotts like Bill Weasley did. Shaking her head she sat back down but she found the sexual feeling hadn't gone away but seemed to have gotten even stronger. She gritted her teeth and tried to ride it out. She had just set herself off with her sexual daydreams that was all. Just one of those things that happened to lonely, horny witches on a long stake-out, right?

Tonks rapidly found the feeling growing and herself panting with lust. She didn't know where the loo was and right now she found she didn't care to go try to find it even if it would give her some privacy. She just couldn't help herself and one hand returned to teasing her taunt nipple while the other dove into her knickers. She shamelessly spread her legs while she happily diddled herself, suddenly not caring if anyone caught her. The powerful sexual feeling washed over her and she brought herself to a quick climax when something incredible happened!

She had barely come down from the quick, but intense orgasm when a wave of emotion seemed to wash over her. She cried out in surprise and lust as she felt like her whole body was being attended to by incubus intent on stealing her soul through pleasure. Her body was wracked with the most powerful orgasm she could ever remember having. It left her dazed and panting, the smell of her sex filled the corridor.

What the fuck had just happened?

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Harry's face wore a satisfied smile as Narcissa struggled to catch her breath. She had seemed to lose control of her muscles for a bit after Harry's aura had coursed through her after he had cum. She was still twitching a bit and he could easily smell her arousal. This smell seemed to act on him like an aphrodisiac since he found himself still semi-hard. He concentrated on his limited metamorphagus abilities and was rewarded as he was able to fill his penis with blood making it hard and ready for more.

Narcissa's eyes widened in surprise as she panted and watched Harry's cock go from being semi-limp to a ragingly hard erection again. Narcissa found herself being magically lifted off the ground and flipped over onto the table with her ass sticking up. Unlike the first time, Harry's wandless magic was gentle. She felt his hands roam over her bottom.

"You truly have a magnificent arse, Narcissa. I can't wait to dive in." Harry said as he continued to explore her body. Again he marveled at the full-bodied, adult curves of her body. Her wide hips and ample bottom. Having Draco certainly hadn't marred her body in any way. Harry couldn't see any stretch marks or any blemish to her pale skin. His exploring fingers found her slit wet and he was easily able to slip two fingers into her.

Narcissa moaned as Harry began to finger fuck her while continuing to caress her with his other hand. She couldn't remember the last time any man...or woman had done so to her. Just the simple touch of his hand as it roamed up and down her back and arse thrilled her. It had been so very long since she had been touched with honest desire. She couldn't help but buck her hips back against his fingers and moan with passion and lust.

"My aren't we a dirty girl. Pillar of society and yet here you are bent over a table like a dirty, dirty girl. Look how you are bucking your hips like a whore! I think you like being used like a dirty girl. Are you a dirty girl, Narcissa?" Harry asked mockingly. Luna had certainly blown his mind with her filthy mouth so perhaps it would work on the uptight woman as well.

"Oh yes! Yes! I'm your dirty girl," Narcissa moaned as Harry increased the speed of his fingers inside her. She moaned again; whatever that magical wave that went through her when Harry came had left her body saturated and buzzing with feeling. Already

she was so close and her body felt out of control! She might as well been a puppet dancing via the strings that Harry so delightfully playing.

"Tell me, what do I need a dirty girl for? I'm sure I can find plenty of those back at Hogwarts. There is Lavender Brown who has pretty tits like you. I bet she'd love to let me fuck them and splash my hot cum all over them. Morag McDonald has a smashing arse like yours. With but a word I'm sure I could have her bent over behind the Quidditch pitch. She is young and fresh" Harry said, his voice low and dirty.

His words seem to enflame the older woman as she ground harder against his hands. "Rumor has it that Millicent Bulstrode doesn't have a gag reflex and she's also got a great set of tits. I willing to bet she'd wouldn't say no to getting a bit of my 'snake' in some broom closet. Ginny Weasley has been wanting to ride my broomstick since she was a little girl. I've heard she's quite the little red fireball." Harry continued with more than a hint of mocking in his voice.

Harry suddenly reached out and grabbed Narcissa by the hair and gave a gentle but firm tug to pull her head back. She gave a lustful gasp and Harry felt her cunt give a spasm against his fingers as well. "So many willing witches who all want into my pants. What do you have that they don't have?" Harry asked as he added a third finger into her. Like Luna the day before, Narcissa seemed to be practically wetting herself she was so moist with desire.

Narcissa's hips bucked as she orgasmed but Harry didn't do much but slow down his thrusting fingers a bit. She was panting which made it hard for her to answer Harry's question. "I...uh...I know things, secret things...uhh...oooh! I know where lots of skeletons are buried and I...ahh...ahh...AAH!" Narcissa screamed with pleasure as another orgasm crashed over her.

She couldn't take any more. To hell with her pride, her position and her poise, she needed Harry and wanted him to take her, make her his. She wanted him to consume her. "Please my lord, take me! I'm yours! I'll do what ever you want. What ever you desire I will do...but please take me! Ravish me! I am your slave!" Her hips bucked enticingly as if searching for Harry's cock that she so desperately craved.

Harry pulled out his fingers and guided his hard cock into her before grabbing her hips. It felt quite different from when he had bent Luna over and buggered her over the vanity back at Hogwarts. Both had been tight and both seemed to go wild as Harry fucked them but Narcissa's cunt was a furnace compared to Luna's tight bum. Her juices made her slick but lack of anything but the odd toy for years kept her quite tight against Harry's thrusting cock. They both groaned as Harry bottomed out before settling down with even strokes. Narcissa's groan quickly grew to shrieks of pleasure and encouragement. With a wide grin, something Seamus had once said came to mind; Narcissa was a screamer. It was a good thing he had thought to cast that silencing charm!

Narcissa pushed herself up onto her arms so she could play with her nipples as Harry fucked her hard. She had used many forms of toys when fucking herself over the years but none of those compared to the hard and searing cock filling her up now. The sound of his body slapping against her sent a thrill through her. His own grunts and moans was like sweet music to her ears and inflamed her already raging lust. She had surrendered herself utterly but she suddenly felt free.

Harry suddenly slapped her ass, making her cry out again, "Oh yes, you'll be my slave. You are going to do what I say when I say it. I'm going to fuck you through the Kama Sutra and then some!" Harry gave a grunt of pleasure as his words caused Narcissa to spasm and grip his cock tightly as she came. Obviously she was turned on by submitting to him. He found the power intoxicating. Why Voldemort hadn't fucked his way into power through binding powerful witches to him was lost on Harry. His loss, he thought as he gloried in Narcissa's hot body.

He hungrily drank in the sight of her body. Seeing her lush hair whip around as she writhed in pleasure. He thrilled at the sight of her arse as he smacked against it as he fucked her. It was so much fuller than the girls back at Hogwarts. Plus the sounds of a previously aloof and untouchable woman crying out his name, begging him for more acted like a drug on him.

All too soon Harry felt the cum seemingly boiling in his scrotum, aching to be free. He pulled out and with a wave flipped Narcissa onto her back before plowing back into her. His thrusts were quick and deep and he couldn't help but begin to grunt like an animal in

heat. Narcissa could sense he was close and eagerly bucked her hips against him, drawing him deeper into her. With a cry, Harry couldn't take any more and pulled out. Even as he began to orgasm, he was mindful of what Luna had said about the probable potency of his semen that even contraceptive charms might not blunt; he didn't want his new sex toy to get pregnant that was sure!

Little did Harry know of Narcissa's fantasies and she eagerly began to jerk him off as he once again shot spurt after spurt of fiery cum. She gloried in the burning stickiness as she directed his cum onto her belly, her tits and onto her face. Again Harry's orgasm was transmitted through his aura and Narcissa couldn't help but give out a piercing shriek of pleasure as it again caused her to have another powerful orgasm. She pulled Harry towards her as she greedily sucked the remaining drops of his cum from him. She continued to suck on it, hoping she could keep it hard so Harry could keep fucking her but soon the feeling was too intense for Harry's hyper-sensitive cock and he had to push her away.

Harry had to admit he couldn't think of anything more sexually stimulating than the sight of Narcissa spread out before him, legs lasciviously spread, her nipples still hard, his cum bright on her body and a look of pure lust still on her face. Oh yes, this was a memory he could drive off two hundred dementors with!

Harry began to laugh; he couldn't help it. His laugh seemed to be the only way to express the sheer pleasure he had just experienced. Narcissa seemed to sense this and her face softened from lust to that of pure satisfaction.

"So, my lord, will I be cast out or did I prove my worth to you?" She said in a sultry voice.

Harry stopped laughing but continued to smile broadly, "Oh I think I shall keep you around if only to pretty the place up. Hogwarts can be so dreary in the winter. I have plans for you."

A shadow fell across her face, "Will you whore me out to your friends?" she asked.

Harry shook his head, "No although my lover will probably have a go at you. The thought of you and her together is enough for me to encourage it." Harry said still grinning.

Narcissa blanched but quickly recovered. "As you wish...my lord."

Harry quirked an eyebrow, "What? Don't worry; Luna is...wait you think I meant Hermione Granger didn't you?" Harry noticed the goose-bumps on Narcissa's skin and realized that the heat of their passion was probably cooling and she was getting cold. With a wave of her wand he scourgified them both. He motioned for her to get dressed.

Narcissa picked her clothing and began to putting them back on. She looked confused. "Luna...as in Luna Lovegood? Selene Ollivander's daughter?" she asked.

"Yes, the one and definite only!" Harry confirmed. "Did you know Selene?"

Narcissa looked thoughtful and then blinked when she realized that Harry was waiting for a reply. "Yes, yes I did. We were good friends back at Hogwarts. Slytherins and Ravenclaws used to be paired up in class before Dumbledore changed it to the current Slytherin/Gryffindor class schedule. Selene was brilliant, quirky and quite the demon in bed. I think most of the girls in my year learned how much pleasure our bodies could deliver when played properly because of her. I was devastated after she died in that accident." Narcissa gave Harry a shrewd look, "That is assuming, of course, she died in an accident."

"How else could she have died?" Harry said noncommittally.

Narcissa laughed, "Come now my Lord, politics and rumor was my only pleasure I had under Lucius. Do you think that the death of a woman I never knew to take a boyfriend or have sex with a male during her time at Hogwarts might not make me suspicious? There were rumors of her being rather chummy with the wife of the DMLE of the time. She was murdered, wasn't she? It is how her daughter ended up being pimped out as you said, correct?"

Harry sighed. He had to admit that besides a brilliant shag, Narcissa was sharp. He would have to be careful. On the other hand, he could see her being extremely helpful considering he was now a lord of three Ancient and Noble Houses. Considering what she had been able to accomplish via Lucius who was head of a 'mere' House was

impressive. Her advice could go far to help his plans to bring down magical Britain. Yes, she would be most helpful with the added bonus of being gorgeous and fantastic in the sack!

"No, Narcissa, you are right. Luna's mother got caught in bed and Xenophilius killed her. He pimped out Luna supposedly to break her of any lesbian tendencies." Harry said.

Narcissa gave a disgusted snort. "He did it just to bring in some galleons to prop up his ridiculous rag. I must admit it is sad the Lovegood fortune was lost. I also knew Xenophilius in school and he always was brilliant. Too brilliant for the common witch and wizard on the street though. He should have known his high-brow tracts would never sell."

"That's pretty much what Luna told me. I think the two of you shall get on famously." Harry reached out and took Narcissa's chin in his hand, his green eyes locked with her brilliant blue ones. "I want to make one thing perfectly clear, Narcissa. Nothing you hear me or Luna say is to be repeated to anyone. As your lord I forbid you from revealing our secrets. If that isn't enough I will bind your thoughts so you tightly you won't be able to remember your own name if I don't command it. Do you understand me? I told Dumbledore and those idiots back at Hogwarts and I'm telling you. I'm not playing games anymore and if you cross me...well I think you got a taste of what I can do. Plus Luna is my partner and I will not deny her. If she wants you, she will have you and I expect you to attend to her needs as if they were my own. Do I make myself clear?"

Narcissa once again marveled at how Harry's eyes could seem to pierce her and make her quake in fear. She had no doubt he meant every word. It made her realize how stupid Draco was that he kept pushing Harry as if he was some sort of match for the new Lord Black. Draco was a child playing games imitating the adults around him. Harry was as real as death, Narcissa saw. She trembled as she said, "I understand perfectly, my lord."

Harry saw that she did indeed. He gave one of his lop-sided smiles. "Don't look so glum. Luna is just as passionate as you and from what I've gathered from things she's dropped she is her mother's daughter. I doubt you will have any problems enjoying anything you two do together. So...I need to check my vaults and then I think I

need to go shopping. We both need new wardrobes and I have a list of things I want to buy if I can't find them in my new acquired vaults. Let me just collect my 'minder' before..."

Harry's voice trailed off. Narcissa looked at him oddly, "My lord?" she asked.

Harry didn't hear her. He hadn't given much thought about it but he realized that the table he had just spectacularly fucked Narcissa on was barely a meter from the wall Tonks was outside leaning up against. What was the range of his orgasmic aura pulse? He went to the door and opened it cautiously.

He immediately smelled the musky scent of a woman's desire. He saw from the condition of Tonk's clothes that she had been having some private time...although one had to wonder how private an open corridor was. The fact that anyone could have come across her while she was obviously doing herself said a lot of what she had been able to feel, even through the wall. Harry needed to remember that when he got back to Hogwarts. If nothing else, it had wonderful prank potential!

The pink-hair witch unsteadily leapt to her feet, her eyes wild. "What the hell was going on in there Harry?"

Harry couldn't help but laugh, "I don't know what you mean Tonksie. What happened out here? It smells quite...dodgy." Harry asked innocently.

Tonks looked about to retort when she thought better of trying to explain. She then got angry again before controlling herself. Looking at Harry's smirk she seemed about to go off on him and once again got control of herself.

"Is everything alright out here, Nymphadora?" Narcissa asked from the doorway. Harry could tell that she had figured out what had happened and couldn't resist needling her niece any more than he could.

Tonks worked her mouth for a second but no sound came out. With a snap she gave up and shut it. She looked down and finally said, "I don't think you should have my aunt's wand Harry."

Harry realized he was still holding Narcissa's wand. "I don't know Auror Tonks; to the victor go the spoils. And such spoils they are!"

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A/N: I'd like to thank everyone who made me a favorite author or listed this as a favorite story. However I would ask that if you are going to review, tell me more than "This rocks!" Those might make my ego get swollen but I'd rather hear what you liked, maybe stuff you didn't like or even questions. The problem I'm worried about is that there are a lot of characters to deal with and I don't want them to all sound the same. If they start too, please let me know! Oh, if something isn't explained, wait till the next chapter. If I haven't explained it then, feel free to review and say, "WTF, over?" =)

The Lovegoods: We don't really know how old Xenophilius or Selene are so I'm going to assume they are around the same age as Narcissa since there is no mention of either of them being near Lily or James' year. Selene didn't marry till after the war which explains why Luna is a year behind Harry. That's my reasoning and I'm sticking with it.

Narcissa's Hair: For some reason my author's note in the previous chapter didn't make it. Obviously by canon Narcissa is a blond. I don't buy that and I went with the hair you see her have in the movies. Why? Well Andromeda has black hair and looked enough like Bellatrix that Harry drew his wand on her in HP:TDH. So you have one daughter with black hair, a second daughter that looks like a younger copy and then you get a...blonde? Almost makes you want to go hmmmmmm? Yes, it is possible her parents had the recessive gene for blond but I'm not going for that. So in my fics, Narcissa has black hair.

Harold Godricson: This is my way of explaining exactly how Harry ends up as a "true Gryffindor" since the Godric line married into the Potter line. I'm going with the idea that Harold was not the head of the Godric line even though he ended up King of England. So Harry isn't the heir of Gryffindor. I guess in retrospect this means I'm going with the semi-common fanfic theme of Gryffindor being more of a title or a place name rather than a family a la Godric of Gryffindor. Hell with names getting corrupted with time it may have originally been Godric of Griffin's Moor or something like that. This story will

have this happen to the name of another well known magical landmark. (Cue foreshadowing! Bwah-ha-ha!)

The Norse Connection: The story of Harold Godricson, Harald Sigurdson Harada (Harald the III of Norway) and Ivar Longbottom bringing in Magicals from Scandinavia is one I will go much deeper in, along with all the good Norse traditions in my future story, Harry Potter and the Ruins of Asgard. I will be using some of the elements I came up with for that story for chapters later on in this story. While Ivar Longbottom isn't real (obviously) Harold Godwinson and Harald Harada were. Jarl is a title meaning anything from chieftain all the way to being equivalent to an earl.

Update The First: Thanks to a sharp-eyed reviewer, I've corrected the name of the Hrolf Harada to the proper Harald. I somehow mixed up Hrolf (who I think was my first idea for Ivar Longbottom's name) with the more proper Harald. Which is retarded because in this fic (and HP: Order of the Stag fic which is on hiatus till I get this one knocked out) Harry is named Harald because of his ancestor.

Malfoy: Ever wonder why a family would keep a name that meant 'bad faith' because I know I did. I mean it is like going by the name Roger Asshole or Susan Liar. Sure many families have gotten stuck with bad names either during immigration or even to demean them by the ruling junta of the day only to keep them the names when they could change them. However none of those things seemed to apply to House Malfoy. So this is my explanation as to why it is so. Plus it explains a bit why Harry and Draco pretty much hated each other from the word go.

Warlock: Old English for deceiver or oath-breaker. Not something you want to be labeled as.

Update The Second: A good catch by Glasshopper who pointed out the head of the Wizengamot is the called Chief Warlock. However, I have a good rationale for why that ties to the story Griphook told that I will have to throw in at some point. My idea is that when the both sides created the Wizengamot as part of the peace negotiations, the first wizard to head it was a local wizard from the south that had sort of gone over to Hadrian Malfoy's side. He was still semi-respected by Henry and his allies. However the northern wizards felt respected or not he was a traitor to the memory of his rightful king and so snuck into the charter that the head of the Wizengamot would be

called the Chief Warlock and the French wizards (and many of the southern English wizards) didn't catch it. After the ritual creating the Wizengamot was done, it was sort of set in stone.

Update the Third: Many of you may have wondered at how the story was set in September and then jumped back in time. Whoops! The trials and tribulations of writing two very similar stories. In HP and the Order of the Stag, Harry goes to Gringotts prior to the start of term. I need to make sure, however, that meeting will be on the correct date of August 1st and not on Harry's birthday.

CHAPTER SIX – OF CLOAKS AND DAGGERS

JORKIN'S CAPES, COATS & CLOAKS, LONDON, SEPTEMBER
27th 1996 – LATE AFTERNOON

Lilith Moon had often been amazed at the twists and turns that life could throw at you. She remembered the awe she had felt when an old woman in an outdated dress and even odder hat had shown up to tell her parents that the weird things that had been happening around the house was because her older brother Shadrach was a wizard. Then the witch, for that is what she said she was, told her parents that Lilith herself was a witch and when the children reached the age of eleven they could go to a school of magic called Hogwarts. They had been accepted under a scholarship program designed to help Muggleborns enter the magical world.

Hogwarts had been another odd one of those twists and turns. The first letters from her brother filled her with wonder and left her impatient to see the magical castle herself. Leaving behind her life in the London borough of Havering to take a magical train to a castle in Scotland certainly was an odd turn of events in anyone's book. To be sorted into Hufflepuff house and spend the next five years learning magic had been like a dream. Lilith couldn't believe that her life had become something like out of a movie.

Of course many of the twists and turns hadn't been pleasant. In her second year her friend Justin Finch-Fletchley had been petrified and everyone was saying that it was because of the famous Boy-Who-Lived, Harry Potter, who was in her year but in Gryffindor House. She had been so relieved that in the end Justin had been restored and rumor had it the monster from the fable Chamber of Secrets had been killed Harry Potter himself!

Things definitely turned when Hogwarts hosted the first Tri-Wizard Tournament in decades during her fourth year. Not only was that exciting by itself but the handsome Cedric Diggory from her own House was chosen as the Hogwarts champion! Again Harry Potter had somehow gotten involved but over time it became obvious to her that things like that just seemed to happen to the Gryffindor boy and he seemed just along for the ride. Cedric certainly seemed to like him even though they were opposing Seekers and didn't hold a grudge against Harry for also being named a champion.

Of course just as term ended another twist happened with the murder of the Hufflepuff hero. It meant a lot to Hufflepuff House that Harry had brought back Cedric's body but they were shocked at the story Harry Potter told of what had happened after the pair had been whisked away from the center of the maze. Lilith hadn't known what to believe but it seemed unlikely from what she had seen over the years that it was all some elaborate ploy by Harry to gather attention as was often hinted at in the Daily Prophet. As if Harry didn't have enough fame and attention as the Boy-Who-Lived! From listening to friends and from what she saw in the few classes she shared with him, Harry hated fame almost as much as he hated Draco Malfoy of Slytherin house.

Lilith noticed that twists follow turns and twists tended to be bad. Sure enough the turns of fourth year turned were followed by twists in her fifth year. Having to endure "Professor" Umbridge was worse than classes with Professor Snape. However much worse was yet to come when Professor Sprout had called her into her office late into her fifth year to sadly announce that the Fund from which her scholarship money had come was shutting down and unless her parents could pay tuition, she would not be able to return to continue her education towards her NEWTs.

Lilith had been devastated! She knew many students went only as far as their OWLs but almost all of them had family businesses they were going into. Her brother Shadrach after he had gotten his NEWTs had gone on to become a clerk at the prestigious office of Kettleridge, Creswell & Dippet and hoped to become a solicitor and maybe even a partner some day. Lilith had planned to go into research. Her Ravenclaw friends seemed a bit amazed that a Hufflepuff would want to do this but she had noticed that as a Muggleborn she had a different take on things than the witches and wizards who grew up with magic. It was, however, not something one could do just with one's OWLs. Sadly her parents were far too poor to afford a Hogwarts tuition.

It was a bad enough of a twist when your life plan hits a wall but then disaster struck her best friend Sally-Anne Perks. Even though she was a Gryffindor she was a Muggleborn like herself. She too was on scholarship and because of that they had met and just hit it off. So Lilith was sad to hear that while her friend's parents were wealthy enough to pay for Sally-Anne's continued education they didn't cotton to magic. She had tearfully told Lilith how cold they

were to her after it was revealed she was a witch. They had never really accepted that magic wasn't somehow evil. Didn't the Bible say suffer not a witch to live? However, Sally-Anne loved to sew and wanted to become a seamstress and design clothing and perhaps work for a company like Madame Maulkin's so just having her OWLs would be fine.

Lilith loved her friend. She was funny, earthy and beautiful in a way Lilith wished she had. She herself felt rather plain next to her friend. Lilith would sometimes confide this to Sally-Anne after they had helped each other through their 'maintenance orgasms' as Lilith like to called them. As they came down from the pleasurable high, Sally-Anne would hug her close when Lilith would break down and tearfully tell her how worried she was. The face in the mirror wasn't pretty enough to catch the eye of a good wizard and Lilith felt like she had marbles in her mouth anytime a potential boyfriend chatted her up.

Sally-Anne had always laughed and calmed her down promising Lilith that she was pretty enough herself and Lilith could always have her 'cast off' boyfriends after she was done with them. It became a bit of a running joke between them and it helped Lilith get through those awkward years when she couldn't help but envy her friends good looks and easy charm with boys. Unfortunately Sally-Anne's good looks drew the attention of the Terrible Twins of Gryffindor.

Fred and George Weasley were notorious at Hogwarts. Sure they were best known for their colorful jokes, pranks and skills as beaters on the Gryffindor Quidditch team. However in the whispered conversations in the girl's bathrooms and Quidditch locker rooms they were infamous for another reason: turning them down if they chatted you up led to bad, bad things. This is why when the twins had stopped the pair for a 'friendly' chat, Lilith had been willing to go along with it. No matter how disgusted she was by George as he leered while looking down her ample cleavage, she was willing to accept it rather than piss them off. Even if it meant sucking him off in a broom closet later it would be better than the alternative. All the older girls at school knew what really happened to Patricia Simpson.

Unfortunately Sally-Anne was a Gryffindor. The Ravenclaws, who shared most classes with the 'Puffs, always said that brave and smart rarely went together. Sally-Anne proved it that day when she not only rejected Fred's advances but coolly told them that her

boyfriend Zacharias Smith wouldn't take their actions lightly. Maybe Sally-Anne thought that because she was Hermione Granger's roommate that the Twins would let her comments slide. What ever the reason, Lilith had worried for her friend. So much so that Lilith ended up sucking off both twins to get them to leave the girls alone after Sally-Anne had stalked off. She did it seemingly gladly and enthusiastically in hopes that if she did so the Twins would forget about Sally-Anne. That would have been a good turn but her fifth year was all about life's twists.

So instead of their hateful pranks the Terrible Twins normally played when they were turned down, they actually went for subtle. Their 'prank' was set to hurt not only Sally-Anne but Zacharias Smith as well. Soon enough Sally-Anne was hugging her and sobbing, telling her the news that she was pregnant. Lilith knew (as did Madam Pomfrey who could not prove it) that it had been the Twins. Sally-Anne had been faithfully taking her contraceptive potions and had insisted that Smith use a Muggle condom as well. That both failed had to be sabotage and that meant the Twins had gotten their revenge for being turned down. It made Lilith sick that they not only got away with it but they had ruined her friend's life over something so petty.

Sally-Anne's morals and religious faith kept her from having the baby terminated. Charms would hide her baby bump till she graduated with her OWLs. Lilith knew, however, that Sally-Anne was in for a rough life when she returned to her parents that disliked that she was a witch and now was an unwed mother with no support. Lilith had never liked Sally-Anne's boyfriend and her feelings turned out to be justified. Zacharias Smith had denied it was his baby and when Madam Pomfrey's test proved him wrong he was able to use his families influence to keep him from 'doing the right thing' or from having to pay a knut in child support. There was no way that the Noble House of Smith was going to 'pay for some mudblood's bastard' her friend was told in a nasty letter from House Smith's solicitor. So Sally-Anne had to return to the Muggle world with nothing to show for her time at Hogwarts except the magic her parents hated and an unwanted child to be.

Lilith, on the other hand, had her own problems. While driving back home from King's Crossing, her parent's car had been hit by a speeding taxi. Both her parents had died instantly and Lilith herself was badly injured. Luckily her brother hadn't been able to join her

parents in picking Lilith up due to the demands of his new job. The twists kept coming when the taxi company had hired some fat-cat shyster solicitor and successfully painted her parents as the ones who had been at fault. So while her medical bills were covered by the NHS, almost all of the money her parents had, to include their home, was taken in the settlement. She and her brother were left with almost nothing.

Her brother had a decent salary for such an entry level position and his bosses at the firm understood his problems and so gave him opportunities to make some extra money. This barely kept them in the small flat in a rather seedy neighborhood. Lilith was deeply thankful her brother wasn't one that would abandon his kin even though it put him through financial hardship. When Lilith recovered both she and her brother knew that Lilith had to get a job and get one quickly.

Life relented at that point with a small turn although it was an ironic one. Sally-Anne had gotten an offer to work at Jorkin's Capes, Coats & Cloaks but had to pass because of her pregnancy. While Lilith had never planned to be a seamstress she knew how to do it. She had often helped Sally-Anne with her designs and was actually pretty good at. Luckily for her this was a basic job which didn't require a great deal of sewing skill or advanced sewing magic. Sally-Anne had told her it would just be a stepping stone for her towards eventual design work. It might have been a steeping stone for Sally-Anne had she been able to take it but for Lilith it was a lifeline when she was hired in place of her friend.

So she spent her days measuring, cutting, sewing, greeting customers and cleaning up at the end of the day. Mrs. Prang, who was her immediate boss, was strict and severe but never took advantage of her because of her poverty. If anything Mrs. Prang praised Lilith's Muggleborn work ethic. She often raged at how lazy the wizard-bred girls were. This, however, didn't make her very popular with Helene and Morgan, the other two girls who worked in the shop. They might as well have been Slytherins the way they treated her. Lilith kept her head down and avoided her workmates. This meant that except for her brother and letters from Sally-Anne, she was all alone in the world. It seemed like all her friends up at Hogwarts simply forgot she existed now that she wasn't at school. It hurt her that for all the supposed loyalty the 'Puffs were famous for it

apparently only applied while at school. She missed her parents desperately and she often cried herself to sleep at night.

So not long after Lilith had turned 'sweet sixteen' her life had been reduced to a basic entry level job that barely helped keep her and her brother afloat. Shadrach worked hard and they both knew it was only a matter of time before he was promoted. However when the food budget was stretched thin and it was all they could do to afford a bi-weekly night out at the cinema to help keep their sanity, it certainly felt like it would be an eternity till then.

It never came up in sibling conversation but both knew there was another way they could make money and that was for Lilith to marry well. That concept was disgusting to them both, being Muggleborns, but Lilith knew that magical Britain might as well be stuck back in time when it came to many cultural concepts long discarded in the modern world. Of course the same applied to her brother, but Shadrach was working so many hours he barely had time to eat and sleep much less look for a wife.

While Magicals lived longer, Lilith had noticed they certainly married early. It seemed rare for a witch not to be married by the time she hit 20 and by 30 they might as well be an old maid. Funny considering the life expectancy for your average witch was 120! What was their hurry? It did mean, however, most of the wizards that were around the age to be potential husbands to her were all up in Scotland dating other witches. Thus all the good husbands would probably be snatched up. The rich and powerful ones surely would be Lilith was certain.

Lilith often dreamed some lordling would come in and see her as his Cinderella in her patched robe and scuffed shoes to see past her poverty and somehow be smitten by her. He would sweep her off her feet and the galleons would flow and she'd be able to get tutors and get a job using her mind instead of going home with pin-pricks in her fingers. Alas while she lived in a magical world it was not one you might see in a Disney movie during a Saturday matinée. Most of the male clients barely noticed her and the looks that the ones who did reminded her far too much of George Weasley.

Bad enough the Twins had opened their joke shop not far from where Lilith worked. She avoided that part of Diagon Alley like the plague even if the two were dating those two ex-chasers from their

old Quidditch team. That fact did nothing to reassure Lilith. She didn't think even marriage would keep the Terrible Twins from a pretty bird that caught their eye and she already had once before. Lilith was sure they'd practically expect more oral gratification if they asked her. So it was better just to avoid that part of the Alley even if it did cause her to make some odd detours.

So her dreams of getting decently married were just that, dreams. She expected that once things got a bit better she could afford to go out a bit more. She cynically predicted she would end up marrying some wizard she met in Diagon Alley, stuck in a similar low-paying job. They'd meet during their hurried lunch hours and commiserate and soon they would be commiserating in bed, using sex to dull the pain of their pedestrian lives. Would they truly love each other or would it just be an excuse not to be alone?

Then because they couldn't bear what their life was alone they would marry so as to have someone to keep them from being by themselves. They would have kids, not because they wanted the children to share in their dull lives but in hopes the children would somehow brighten their existence with their childish innocence. Maybe their kids might somehow get the life their parents had had taken from them. Later after their children had moved away they would then end their lives like some of the wrecks she saw in the Alley, working into their very twilight years, their backs bent and the skin shrunken over their bones like leather. Muggles always seemed to wish they could live longer. Lilith looked at the 100 plus years she could expect ahead of her with dread and loathing.

This very real scenario depressed her and she tried not to think about it. However late at night, when she was often woken by the lorry delivering crates of produce to a nearby market, she often brooded on it. She tried to convince herself if she kept a stiff upper lip and worked hard like her grandparents had after the War she could get ahead. But she knew in her most secret of hearts that no matter how hard she worked her dream of being a researcher was impossible and ending up a mid-level manager like Mrs. Prang was the likely future for her. For how often in the real life did a young, handsome lord with galleons to burn who might actually notice her would come in one day just to buy a cloak?

So Lilith had to be amazed anew at the twists and turns of life when not only did such a young lord do just that but that she was actually

kneeling before him sucking his wonderful cock to his obvious pleasure while her whole body was seemingly on fire with sexual passion!

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GRINGOTTS, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 - AFTERNOON

Tonks had to admit she was one brassed off witch. Oh sure she had recently had the most mind-blowing orgasms she had ever had in her life. The fact those had happened while she had been unabashedly diddling herself in a semi-public corridor in Gringotts where any Trog, Durg or Hambok could have wandered by did nothing to help her mood.

It also didn't help that something was definitely up with Harry fucking Potter! "Harry needs a guard for his meeting with the goblins, Nymphadora," Dumbledore had said. "I have talked to Director Bones and she and I agree that with the mood of the Ministry someone from the Order should escort him," the old man had explained. "I'm sure he will be delighted to see you and won't be the spot of bother he was earlier," Dumbledore had soothed.

What a load of bollocks that turned out to be! It was true Tonks had been happy not to find a surly, combative teen when she had picked him up that morning but since then NOTHING had gone the way she had expected it! Suddenly Harry is zipping through floos with ease, chatting up goblins like one of their clan and seeing Director Ragnok privately! Then suddenly he was the head of not one but three Ancient and Noble House. Plus of all things he was now her Lord Black! She'd gone from being the cool, spunky (and drop dead sexy) elder cousin to being the one of those he was responsible for. She half expected to wake up and find herself on the floor of the new Weasley's Wizard Whizzes after a bad trip on one of the Twin's newly patented daydreams!

This was also on top of the fact that Harry was a far cry from the 15 year old teen that she remembered from when the Order had rescued him from his relatives last year. Obviously a year had passed and a lot had happened since then to Harry. Between the dementor attack, that Toad Umbridge and then losing Sirius, Tonks had felt sorry for her cousin. Yet Harry had gone through terrible things before, having Voldemort resurrected out of Harry's own

blood came to mind, and he always seemed to keep being the same Harry Potter. Now it was like he was a totally different wizard. A confident wizard and one who seemed to know what he wanted and where he wanted to go. Then there was his aura...

Tonks bit her lip and readjusted her robe to hide her traitorous nipples that kept trying to poke through her blouse. She had finally pegged that mysterious sexual feeling as coming from Harry. When he walked away, it lessened; when he was standing next to her she felt like she really, really wanted to see what sort of broomstick the raven-haired Seeker had under his robes.

To make matters worse was how her abilities were reacting. While Harry had been waiting for one of Griphook's flunkies to fetch something, Tonks had caught Harry checking out her aunt's breasts. He obviously liked them and Tonks had to admit that the youngest Black sister had managed to get the best genes in her generation. There was no denying her mom and aunt were beautiful. In fact it was amazing Bellatrix was still beautiful even after her time in Azkaban. Of course her beauty was marred by the fact she was totally barking mad. In comparison, Narcissa was frankly stunning. Tonks had found her own tits starting to swell as her metamorphagus abilities seem to sense that Harry might like a bigger bosom.

She gritted her teeth and cursed her low pay as an entry level auror. If she had more galleons she could afford more charmed clothes. As it was she didn't have many that would magically shift a bit as she morphed her body. Today's bra and blouse weren't one of those few so she had to constantly force her tits back down in size before she either burst her bra or passed out from hypoxia.

So all in all Tonks was a witch whose knickers were definitely in a twist. Bad enough said knickers were still damp and if she wasn't careful and dropped into fantasizing about the Boy-She-Wanted-To-Shag they would get wetter still. So it was a relief when it finally looked like the new Lord Black seemed ready to leave.

Maybe she could shag him when she got him back to his tower back at Hogwarts. Correction, she'd shag him a lot when she got him back. She would exact a lot of pleasure from him as compensation for the embarrassments of the day.

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Harry bowed before turning away from Griphook. His trip to his vaults had been an experience and the papers and figures the goblin had shown him about his wealth certainly had been educational. Growing up a poor abused orphan didn't make becoming a powerful and filthy rich lord an easy transition. Harry shook his head when he had seen how much more rich and powerful he would have been if House Potter hadn't been gutted. There was going to be some painful retribution for that crime, Harry swore. It was true, however, the wealth from the vaults of the ancient Peverell family did a lot to make up the difference and Griphook was practically salivating at the prospect of the galleons he would make on commission by managing these new funds for Harry. He had decided Griphook could manage both Houses finances till things settled down and he could decide if another manager was needed.

For now Harry was content. He had money, he had scores of magical items and artifacts to look over when he got the chance to come back for another visit and he had a wand. It might not be his trusted holly and phoenix feather wand but it would do for now. Harry wasn't sure what wood it was and no idea what the core might be but out of all the wands he found in the ancient Black and Peverell vaults it had been the only one that respond to him like his old wand did. It would do, Harry had thought grimly, especially since right now Dumbledore and company thought him wandless. So on top of his new skill with his wandless magic, Harry was armed and dangerous!

And he was hungry. It had been a long time since breakfast back at Hogwarts and the small goblin cakes and water during the meetings hadn't done much but take the edge off. Then there was the small matter of him and Narcissa shagging each other silly. Harry was finding hot sex cooled one hunger (briefly) but did nothing to feed the appetite. So some lunch was in order before he went shopping.

He saw Tonks had noticed he was finished and was coming over. It hadn't been lost on him that she had been keeping her distance while he had been conducting his business. When Tonks' robe slipped it was evident that she was still turned on if the nipples poking up from under her blouse were any indication. Harry knew that even without him consciously focusing on her, his aura was

affecting her. He knew this because she hadn't accompanied him to his vaults and knowing Tonks' dedication to her auror duties she normally would have. Harry figured being crammed into those small carts next to him was something she didn't think she could handle without losing her professional bearing.

From the knowing looks Narcissa had given him at the time he was sure she knew this as well. Narcissa hadn't minded the closeness and she proved it when they had 'broken in' the Black vault when they got there. Lumpy or not, there was something to be said about fucking a beautiful woman on robe over a pile of gold! Harry knew he probably should feel worse about Narcissa's age considering she was 25 years older than him. Of course Harry did have more and more memories of an adult wizard beginning to become available to him. He guess he simply didn't look at thinks like a teenager anymore.

There was the fact of her being Draco's mum. Funny how this really didn't matter to him. He guessed it was because there seemed to be so little of Narcissa in Draco. The white-haired git was his father's son alright. Perhaps it was because Draco looked so much like his father with nothing to show that Narcissa was his mother. Mrs. Weasley could have been Draco's mum for all his features showed a difference from his father's face. Draco certainly hadn't gotten any of her brains or subtlety Harry thought with a wry grin.

He had thought about the age bit on their cart ride back to the surface. Most witches could expect to live till around 120 in contrast to 75 which was normal for Muggle women. Thus Narcissa as a witch was really only '25' if one looked at her age against her lifespan in contrast to a Muggle woman. He smiled at how Hermione would have been proud of his reasoning. When he thought about it, from a Magical point of view, Tonks was still practically a teen. Again this made Harry wonder why if Magicals lived so long, why did were they considered adults even earlier than Muggles? By Harry's earlier math, one would expect Magicals to have to be practically 30 before being considered an adult.

Then again Harry had given up on the Magical world making any sort of logical sense after having to suffer through the years at Hogwarts at the mercy of the moving staircases. Had the Founder's actually hated their students or was it actually part of some sort of test no one told them about? Harry wouldn't put it past just being an

elaborate joke played on the students by the teachers to make up for having to put up with their childish antics term after term. Maybe Hogwarts herself was messing with the students in response to all the graffiti and gum stuck on the undersides of chairs and the like.

So while the age difference should have bothered him, he found it didn't. Narcissa was beautiful and sexy and that was enough for him. Just thinking about her made his cock twitch which made him grimace a bit. Harry knew he needed to buy some sort of ointment when they went out later. His poor penis wasn't going to make it at the rate he was going! As much as he was sure it blew the minds of the women he was having sex with, Harry did wonder how long it would be before his magical core synched with his body so he wouldn't be constantly broadcasting some sort of "come over here and fuck me baby" signal through his aura at all times.

He had noticed Tonks wasn't the only witch affected; the other women in the lobby had started to check him out the moment he walked in. While as the Boy-Who-Lived, Harry was used to being stared at but having witches who looked like they were around 80 in Muggle years seemed to want to have a go with him made Harry want to beat a hasty retreat. Having sex with a sexy 41 year old was one thing; having someone like Neville's gran checking him out was another!

Seeing the grim line set on Tonks' face, Harry knew she was working to keep herself under control as she walked closer to him and his aura. It didn't help that when Harry saw her he unconsciously focused his aura on her and with her being very sexy in her own way it was hard for those thoughts not to be transmitted through his aura. Harry knew he was guilty of teasing her but he couldn't help it! Paladin of Nemesis or not, he still was a teenager!

Earlier if he noticed her not paying attention he'd carefully move closer to her. As he did so he could see her face start to take on a dreamy look and sometimes she'd traced outlines on her leg with her finger as if she was circling a nipple with them. Harry was sure he knew what she was dreaming about and he had to admit that when the opportunity arose he probably would take her up on it. Cousin or not, Tonks was hot and had been one of his first fantasy girls. He had never masturbated often but when he did it was almost always while thinking about either her, Katie Bell or Fleur Delacour.

After seeing the half-Veela in her bathing suit it was sort of hard not too, that was for damn sure!

"So Lord Black, are you ready to head back to Hogwarts," Tonks asked a bit formally. There were a fair bit of people in the lobby so she felt it better to use Harry's new title. Tonks knew they needed to get out quick before the press swarmed down on them. She thought she could see a few hanging out outside. Luckily that vulture Rita Skeeter didn't seem to be one. She planned to ask Harry if he would consent to the fee for using the Gringott's floo connection so they could avoid the reporters all together. Knowing how much he hated his fame and reporters in general, Tonks didn't think Harry would bat an eye at this request.

Harry gave a sigh. It was time to school Tonks on the new facts of life. Hopefully being in the lobby of the bank would keep her from freaking out. "Actually Auror Tonks, I'm up for lunch and then I'm off for a bit of shopping. After that I have an appointment at Grimmauld Place to get that squared away. Depending how late it is and how tired I am at that point, I may just stay there tonight."

Sure enough Tonks' eyes bugged out, "Harry I have...uhm my Lord Black, my instructions where to escort you to your meeting and then back to Hogwarts. These orders came from the Headmaster with the blessings of the Director Bones herself!"

Harry gave a winning smile, "I'm sure they did and I commend them for their diligence for thinking of my safety as a minor without a wand. However I'm now an emancipated lord of three Ancient & Noble Houses. Furthermore, since I haven't had a class since the start of term, it could be argued that I am not a student and thus not under the Headmaster jurisdiction. Since I am emancipated as well as having my required OWLs I'm afraid the DMLE no longer has any jurisdiction either other than a general one pertaining to my well being in these dangerous times. So you have discharged your duties and should feel free to get back to the DMLE I would totally understand. However if you feel the need to continue guarding me until you receive new instructions, I'm sure Director Bones would not fault your logic or loyalty to your mission."

Tonks blinked in surprise. Harry was sure she had been expecting some sort of childish outburst and threats about not going back on his part and not the cold hard facts regarding his new status. "So

Tonks, you have two choices, you could leave and quickly get back to Dumbledore and tell him what is going on or you can stay. If you leave there is nothing stopping me from having Narcissa here take me by side-along apparition to anywhere I want to go. Were that to happen, you 'losing' me probably won't sit well with either of your bosses so think carefully on what you do next!"

Tonks paled a little at that. Harry was sure that Order of the Phoenix member or not, losing him on her watch would not go well for the pink-haired witch. "Harry...look you have to go back! Dumbledore said so! You can't just go running around England! You-Know-Who is out there and the Death Eaters would love to catch you outside Hogwarts' wards!" Tonks practically stuttered.

It was just as Harry had expected. Dumbledore had spoken and thus it must be so! It was no wonder the old man had never sought to become the Minister of Magic as Hagrid told him on his first day in Diagon Alley. It was obvious many Magicals did what he told them to simply because he was Dumbledore. It was well past time to rain on that parade!

Harry took a step closer to Tonks and started to fully focus his aura on her. Sure it was fun to project sexual desire through it but Harry knew it worked for any feeling and right now he was funneling his seriousness directly at her. Harry realized that Dumbledore had been doing something similar the entire time he knew the wizard. All that grandfatherly eye twinkling was simply the manifestation of him projecting his own powerful aura onto whom he was speaking to. No wonder people tended to agree with Dumbledore when they were talking to him directly! Again it showed that Riddle was an idiot for going all dark and destructive when with his good looks and powerful aura he probably could be the Minister of Magic right now and be revered and probably well shagged to boot.

Tonks obviously felt the shift in Harry's aura because she took an unconscious step backwards and her wand dropped out of the holster hidden up her sleeve and into her hand. Harry had one of those now as well. The Black vaults had been stocked with all sorts of wonderful toys like that. However Harry had no intention of dueling his cousin so he toned it down a bit.

"Look Tonks you just have to face up to the new reality," Harry said soothingly. "This morning I was a minor under house arrest back at

Hogwarts. Now I am a legal adult and I have money, power, votes in the Wizengamot and my OWLs. Therefore there is nothing you can do to stop me from doing whatever the hell I want unless you want to try and arrest me under some trumped up charges like Fudge tried to do last year. If it makes you feel any better, I do intend to return to Hogwarts but not right now. Maybe tonight or maybe tomorrow morning depending on how I feel."

Tonks continued to look mutinous but Narcissa reached out and put a calming hand on her niece's shoulder. "Nymphadora, please think before you speak again. Everything our Lord Black has said is true. Yes he's young, just turned sixteen, and most will still try to see him just as a mere student. It isn't the case anymore and truly it never was. He is the Boy-Who-Lived, the champion of the Tri-Wizard Tournament at 14 and the wizard who has stymied the very Dark Lord himself. You simply cannot allow yourself to continue to see him as you did. He is now Lord Potter-Peverell-Black. It might be better for you to considering him as nothing else. Forget his age, his past and what you thought of him prior to now. He isn't just Harry Potter any more. In fact, I think in a very real way Harry Potter died today. Is that not right, my Lord Harold Black? Narcissa asked as she turned toward Harry with a raised eyebrow.

A coldness suddenly gripped him on hearing these words. Harry was stunned at this thought but in a blaze of understanding he realized it was true. Harry Potter was dead if he had ever truly lived. He wasn't the Boy-Who-Lived; he never had been. He only remembered that night or his parents when dementors were around him or when he looked at old photos. The closest he had ever gotten to his parents had been a mere echo of their souls that had come out of Voldemort's wand. Raised by the hateful Dursleys, how was he a Potter except merely in the blood? Harry Potter was the boy everyone seemed to think they knew but didn't.

No one had ever really taken the time get to know the real him. No one except Hermione and Katie. For all their current closeness, how much did Luna and Harry really know of each other? Surely Harry was excited to get on that journey of discovery together with Luna but the truth was Narcissa was right, Harry Potter was mostly a concept in the minds of others. A concept people hung their hopes, desires, fears or hate upon.

Ginny Weasley had fallen in 'love' with the concept that was Harry Potter years before ever meeting him in person. Then she often seemed put out that the 'real' Harry didn't conform to her fantasy version. Harry thought about how he had recently felt like everyone he knew were just actors playing roles and thus not really who Harry thought them to be. How ironic that Narcissa had pointed out that he himself had unconsciously been going along with playing the part of Harry Potter, someone who he had never been.

The 'Harry Potter' who Harry thought he was had been all about wanting to turn his back on all the intrigue, mysteries, plots and duels to the death and just live a good and happy life. That Harry Potter wanted a wife, a family and a desire to leave something lasting behind him and maybe a chance to play some Quidditch now and again. Sadly Harry had willingly given all that up. He had known this when he had fully accepted what Luna had told him and stopped running from his destiny. He was tool of Fate. The currents of Higher Magic had raised him up to right wrongs and restore the balance of what should be. Harry knew in all the tales and legends of old it was rare that one touched by Fate like himself ever got to live happily ever after once their appointed task was completed. It was like Harry wasn't a real person at all; he was like some elemental force who existed for a specific task and nothing else.

No, Harry Potter was dead and in his place was Harold Black who had a dark road ahead of him. A road filled with vengeance and death. Narcissa was right but it wasn't just Tonks who needed to stop thinking of him as Harry Potter but Harry himself as well. A wave of crushing sadness washed through him. Even though he had accepted his destiny in his head, it was another thing to realize it in his heart what he had truly given up or the stark reality of the implications of what his existence might be.

Harry Potter was dead. Long live Lord Harold Black, the Paladin of Nemesis.

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THE INSURMOUNTABLE PENQUIN, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th
1996 – A BIT LATER

Harry sipped his Samuel Smith's Tadcaster Bitter with enjoyment. He had decided to try one after finishing his lunch. Harry had found

out that morning that until recently House Potter had owned the Smith brewery in North Yorkshire. So he decided he should give it a taste. As nice as butterbeer was, Harry had to admit real beer had its charms. Harry vowed that no matter what happened he was getting ownership of the brewery back. It had been in his family since it was founded. Even as gutted financially as House Potter was, through it Harry was still the Earl of Yorkshire which he learned was the magical equivalent of the Earl of Northumbria. He had been surprised to learn that he could vote in the House of Lords on certain topics that affected both the Magical and Muggle world. Amazing how he had been just a wiry teen with about 32 pounds and some galleons in a Trust Fund to his name this morning and now he had votes in the Wizengamot and House of Lords by lunch!

Being the Earl of Yorkshire had sort of sparked some things that he had discussed with Narcissa over lunch. It had seemed over the years in order to keep away from House Malfoy and their allies and help keep the peace, almost all of the 'southern' Potters had moved up to join their northern cousins. Except for a day house for when the Wizengamot was in session, by the time of his grandparents there had been little south of York that House Potter still owned that wasn't simply a business. So why had his parents been killed in a house in Godric's Hollow way down in West County?

The name implied a link to Harold Godricson's family but Narcissa had pointed out that while he had been King of England, as a magical he had simply been a younger son of his line and so it was doubtful any properties had gone with Godric's daughter when he married Henry Potter. Due to the start of the magical civil war at the time there probably hadn't been time to debate a proper dowry.

Not all families at the time had 'proper' house names as many still used the more Norse tradition of wizards having their father's name with witches having their mothers. Harry, for example, would have been Harry Jameson in the old days. However after the Wizengamot came to being most lines settled on an official House name for use in the new body which is how Godric's line became House Gryffindor. Harry found it interesting that Harold's great-uncle whom Harold's father had been named for was the Godric of Hogwarts fame. At the time he was known as Godric of Griffin's Moor, the villa he had grown up in. Somehow over time that had been knocked around into Gryffindor.

So just because there was 'Gryffindor' blood in Harry, it didn't automatically mean that the house his parents died in was something they owned. Narcissa didn't know of any reason for it since she knew James had grown up at the Potter estates in Yorkshire. Harry knew from things Aunt Petunia had said over the years that she and his mother grew up in Oldham which was a borough of Manchester. Both were a long way away from West County. It was just another mystery in Harry's life that he needed to find answers for. Somehow it felt important to him that he solve that mystery.

Looking around the pub Harry spied Tonks doing a very good job of chatting with a bloke at the bar while simultaneously keeping a watch on both him and Narcissa in their booth and as well as eying who came through the door. He had to admit that clumsy or not, Tonks had some skills. After accepting the new reality of things she seemed to just get on with it. She didn't even blink when he asked if he could speak with Narcissa alone for a bit. She'd had simply shrugged and said she couldn't be in the booth anyway since it limited her ability to watch and react.

Harry had been glad his face had shown how surprised and pleased he'd been at this show of professionalism because the look on Tonks' face had been worth it. Harry had been feeling a bit bad at how he had teased his cousin only to have to drop a reality bomb on her later. He wondered if she was actually having as much fun chatting with that bloke as it looked. She did like to have fun and it was hard not to have a good time when Tonks was around and in a good mood.

Harry had been impressed with Narcissa as well. The press had descended upon them the minute they had left the bank and Harry had been sorely pressed not to toss them out of Diagon Alley into the streets of Muggle London with his wandless magic. Maybe nailing them with some fun hexes as they flew away just for good measure. Narcissa, however, had waded into the pack of reporters and coolly shut them down. Harry had marveled how she rattled off answers to their questions like she had been preparing press releases about the events of the day for weeks prior. She coldly snubbed some while subtly rewarding others with a better quote. Then she had cut them off as harshly as if she had been a guillotine and they had swiftly departed.

It had been Tonks' idea to hit this pub for lunch since normally it was more for the workers of the Alley and less 'touristy' as the Leaky Cauldron was. Both Narcissa and Tonks' had laughed that he naïvely had thought the Cauldron was the only place to get food in Diagon Alley. Narcissa had explained that as the main entry to the Alley it was kept to look all old and 'witchy' for all the out of town Magicals as well as for the few Muggles that came through. There was a lot more to Diagon Alley than Harry had been allowed to see over the years. This made him realize again how much of a trove of information Narcissa represented. She knew the ins and outs of Wizarding society as well as where all the pertinent skeletons were buried just as she had claimed while begging Harry not to throw her out into the streets earlier that morning.

"Why are you going back to Hogwarts, my lord?" Narcissa asked suddenly, breaking into Harry's woolgathering.

Harry was a bit startled by this question. Then he realized it was a very fair question considering Narcissa didn't know the full score like he did. He really needed to get her and Luna together. Besides the smoking hot sex he was expecting to fully enjoy watching, Harry knew that Narcissa would almost certainly help fill in some gaps in what was going on around them.

Harry took another sip of his beer to collect his thoughts. Narcissa had already cast a spell to mask what they had been talking about from others in the pub. A spell, Harry was surprised to learn, that Snape himself had created back when he was in school. Harry admitted that the greasy haired git also had some skills even if he was a vindictive bastard.

"Well Cissy, it is a bit complicated but mostly because Hogwarts is where Dumbledore is." Harry finally replied. He found it odd that this stately woman of stunning beauty preferred to go by the name Cissy. For some reason this made Harry think of some Yank yokel in pig-tails wearing coveralls with a piece of straw in her mouth. Of course who was he to talk? Harry had to live with the endless 'hairy' puns just as much as Sirius had had to endure with the puns on his 'serious' name.

Narcissa gave him a look that clearly said 'go on' so he continued, "Between what I learned when I ended up with a lot of Voldemort's memories and what Luna has discovered it seems the most obvious

roads to who has been manipulating me all my life lead to the Headmaster's office. Don't they say keep your friends close and your enemies closer? At Hogwarts I can do both. Plus I have potential allies there as well as people that need to be punished and others that need protection. Besides, as an emancipated lord the Headmaster cannot keep me there. I can come and go as I please so it isn't like I will be trapped up in Scotland. For now it also means I can use Hogwarts' wards to keep me from being bothered by Voldemort till I feel like I want to take him out."

Narcissa couldn't keep her eyebrows from rising in stark surprise. "I find disconcerting yet oddly reassuring that you dismiss the Dark Lord so cavalierly. It does hearten me and give me hope especially considering that I'm surely targeted for execution now by the Death Eaters. I know too much to be allowed to live."

Harry gave his signature lop-sided grin, "I am sorry Cissy, I know it is hard to believe but trust me when I say that Voldemort has more to be afraid of me than I have need to be afraid of him. Actually right now his Death Eaters are more of a threat to me than he is and one of the first things I intend to do is whittle them down in strength."

Narcissa gave him an approving look. "Yes many people always overestimated Voldemort as a threat because while he is insanely powerful he almost never goes on missions personally. All that power at his command and he rarely uses it. So it is the Death Eaters that need to be attacked, my insane sister Bellatrix especially. In targeting me, they will have to seek you out. In addition, Lucius will be unable to bear the shame of what you have done. No matter that he likes to bugged young boys, the idea that you could be taking pleasure from me will drive him into an insane rage. His reach is long and I doubt even being locked up in Azkaban will hold him for long. The 'unfairness' of our divorce might actually help him worm his way out of prison. I can practically hear him plead how he needs to look after Draco. Of course that is a preposterous idea considering how little time he ever put in raising him. He will just want revenge for this supposed slight on his honor." Narcissa looked sad, "I'm sure the same could be said of my son."

Harry reached out and took her hand, "Cissy, I'm sorry. I know he's your son and no one can simply tell a mother to just forget their child. You need to remember one thing, though. Draco made his choice to be his father's son a long ago and he had constantly reaffirmed that

since then. If you raised him like you said, not only has he chosen to be his father's son but he has turned his back on all the lessons you tried to teach him as his mother. Sounds to me in light of today's history lesson that Draco is just doing what Malfoy's do best and that is betray people."

The hint of tears came to Narcissa's eyes as she struggled to control herself. "I know my lord, I do indeed but it is another thing to accept that the wizard you are talking to will be the one to kill your child. I can't stop you and even worse I don't want to stop you. I see Draco becoming even worse of a monster than Lucius!"

Harry nodded, "Trust me Cissy, I know how you feel. Even though I have accepted the role I am to play, I still have this feeling that before I am allowed to die that I will be forced to make some sort of sacrifice before this is all done. It isn't enough that I've never had a normal life and then I willingly gave up the very idea that I could have one. No, somehow I know I'm going to have to do something, kill someone that I hold dear. I can't shake it. However, I can only go forward knowing what is coming is going to be bad. I chose to walk this path and so I will no matter what the consequences."

Narcissa dabbed at her eyes, "I knew from the minute you told me how Ms. Granger had stopped you from killing Draco that my son's days were numbered. He's dead and you are his end; Draco simply doesn't understand his fate is already sealed."

Harry nodded again, "Unlike my dear Headmaster, I don't believe in redemption of those who have gone down the Death Eater path. I know now what one has to do to earn the Mark and what sort of mind set that entails. If you are correct in your worries that Draco took the Mark this summer then his fate is indeed sealed. No, if Draco has the Mark then he is tainted by a choice he freely made and sealed with a terrible crime. I doubt one could ever realistically come back after all that."

Harry looked pensive. "It's why I don't think I'm going to survive all this. After what I am willing to do to finish all this, who am I to expect that I won't suffer for what I am about to do? That it will be for the Greater Good as Dumbledore would say doesn't relieve me of responsibility for my actions."

Narcissa gave him an odd look. "My lor...Harry, I know you told me that the Sorting Hat had wanted to put you into Slytherin but what you said proves you are a true Gryffindor. Bravery isn't stupidly going into battle thinking you have the skill and tools to persevere. Bravery is going in knowing you are probably not coming back and going anyway because it is what you must do. The longer I am around you I can feel what Luna Lovegood has sensed about you. You have been touched by Fate and you will go on to do great things."

"Great things, terrible things to be sure, but great..." Harry murmured. He remembered the look in Ollivander's eerie eyes when he had said that. Harry had thought he was talking about Voldemort then. Had Ollivander been actually talking about Harry himself? He shivered again about how his whole life seemed to have been plotted out beforehand and he was just going through the motions. That no matter how much free will he thought he had, his whole life might just be a bunch of threads in the hands of the Moire, Parcae, Norns or whatever you wanted to call Fate. How many threads of life would be cut short by his actions until his own was finally severed?

Harry shook his head to clear it and then finished his beer. Morbid thoughts brought no profit to paraphrase the goblins. Besides he had a lot to do before he met with those same goblins to get the new Fidelius charm put on Grimmauld Place. Which reminded him...

"Cissy, I need to do some quick business so don't freak out, okay?" Harry told her. At her nod he called out, "Dobby!"

The gaudily clad elf appeared on the table and gave a squeak before falling off beside Harry on seeing Narcissa. "Dobby, get up. Narcissa isn't going to hurt you." Harry reassured the shaking elf.

Dobby let Harry push him up to a sitting position but continued to stare at his ex-mistress, "Master Harrys won't be making Dobby go back to the Bad House, wills he?" the elf said in a tone so pathetic it tugged on Harry's heart.

"No Dobby, in fact Narcissa is part of my house now. She too has been freed from the Bad House. I may need you to help her from time to time; will you be able to do that?"

Dobby nodded but Harry could tell the elf's heart wasn't into it. Harry had an idea, "Dobby, I know you've wanted to be my elf. I'm prepared to accept that now. Do you think Winky would as well? Then she could help Narcissa here so you could focus on me. Would that work?"

Harry had a hard time to keep from laughing considering that Dobby acted like he just shat himself with happiness. After going back and grabbing Winky and a quick round of magical oaths later, Harry now had two very happy house elves of his own. He'd have to deal with Hermione about it later but he figured she had other things to scold him over first. He sent Dobby off to start working on Grimmauld Place along with the injunction he could do whatever house elves did to traitorous elves like Kreacher.

He sent Winky, however, to the Shrieking Shack which he had earlier had found out (to his surprise) that he owned as Lord Black. Apparently Sirius' uncle Alphard had let Dumbledore use it to house Remus while he was in his werewolf form back when he was at school. Apparently this was the act of kindness that got him blasted off the Black Tapestry.

Harry planned to have his elves renovate the insides but leave the outsides the same. Narcissa could stay there and stay hidden. Plus with the hidden passageway to Hogwarts meant they could easily keep in touch. Harry gave an internal grin considering how much "in touch" he intended to stay with her. Considering Narcissa was such a screamer during sex, putting her in the Shrieking Shack seemed oddly appropriate! His cock grew hard at the thought of rekindling the old Hogsmeade legend. Harry let out a sigh. He shagged and shagged and still at the mere thought of sex he was ready for more. He'd already fucked Narcissa hard enough today that she admitted in the Vault she was a bit tender. Now what was he going to do?

JORKIN'S CAPES, COATS & CLOAKS, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – LATE AFTERNOON

"Oh Merlin, Lilith, I'm cumming!" Harry gasped. He didn't want to surprise her with a mouthful of spunk but the pretty chestnut-haired girl just bore down harder as Harry began to cum. As he had been done all day, he shot what seemed like an endless supply of steamy cum while the willing witch greedily sucked it down with

obvious relish even as she found herself having a tremendous orgasm as Harry's aura flared.

As Harry's cock pumped his seed down Lilith's throat there was a part of him that was wondering where all this cum was (ahem) coming from. He didn't think it was normal. Was it just a magical sort of thing like some weird biological duplication charm that wizards had that Muggle men didn't? Whatever the reason, Harry came enough that some of it leaked out of Lilith's mouth, down her chin and onto her very ample bosom. Harry was pretty sure his mother must not have breast fed him because he seemed to be entranced by tits and for a sixteen year old Lilith had a very nice pair filling out her robe.

Lilith looked deliriously happy to Harry as she wiped up the remains of Harry's cum with her fingers to be licked off with obvious enjoyment. Harry hoped that it was true and Lilith wasn't making a show just to please him. He felt an erotic thrill seeing her do it but he didn't want girls thinking they needed to do things they didn't want to do just to please him. When Ron hadn't been speaking to him in Fourth year Harry had been in the library a lot and he overheard many things. Things that made him question most of what he heard the guys back in the dorm room brag about. Seamus was not the pleaser-of-witches he thought he was, that much was certain from the comments Harry had overheard. Almost everything he thought girls did because they like it had actually been done just to make him feel better. That Seamus never bothered to return the favor was not lost on the girls. It probably explained why he never kept a girlfriend for long.

He had loved cumming on Katie's tits back in the day. Her realizing how much her breasts excited him was the way she finally gotten Harry to overcome his inhibitions and start getting himself off. Harry had felt guilty about it since he was getting off and Katie was just getting sticky out of it. She had laughed when Harry had mentioned this. Katie had said it was really erotic to watch him jacking off knowing it was because of her. She said the look of lust in his eyes as he drank in her body made her tingle and she often would think of it when she had her own private alone time. She assured him she did get something out of it.

As Harry looked down on Lilith he thought of this and something he had noticed after his first bout of sex with Narcissa. There was no

denying one of the most beautiful sights in the world was a satisfied witch looking up at you with passion. The look in Lilith's eyes as she stroked the last drops out of Harry's rapidly shrinking cock made his breath catch in his throat which was saying something considering he was still gasping for air from his intense orgasm. Katie had been right; Harry would remember the look in Lilith's eyes for a long time and probably would be thrilled each time he thought of it. He hoped the look on his face would do the same for Lilith.

Harry let out a happy chuckle and a smile that left no doubt to Lilith how pleased he was. "Whoever said money can't buy happiness simply didn't know where to go shopping!" Harry joked.

Lilith gave a laugh after giving his cock a last quick kiss, "But Harry, you haven't bought anything yet!" She said with an impish grin.

Harry gave a grin in return. "After customer service like that I might have to arrange to have my cloak stolen so I have to come back and get a replacement!"

Lilith blushed, "Well I'm not too sure Mrs. Prang would approve of my 'customer servicing' but I'm glad you liked it."

Harry gave another happy chuckle as he pulled up his trousers, "What wasn't there to like? You were brilliant!" Harry wasn't just saying that. Narcissa had been good when she had sucked him off earlier but Lilith's tongue seemed to know just what he liked. It had been amazing! In fact he wanted to return the favor. He was sure the pretty young witch would taste lovely. However considering this was where Lilith worked he didn't think it was the place to try and get her screaming with pleasure, silencing charms or no.

In fact Harry looked at the door with a bit of dread, halfway expecting someone to be irately banging on it demanding to know what was going on. Again he wondered how far the affects of his aura were. There were two other girls working in the shop as well as Tonks. Where they out there wondering why they suddenly had orgasmed? Harry was sure Narcissa, who had left with a knowingly look earlier, had stationed herself close enough to get another orgasmic burst herself.

He helped Lilith to her feet and couldn't help kissing her. The witch continued to blush prettily. "Lilith, I want to return the favor for what

you just did but I'm thinking this isn't the best place. After I get my cloak I was going to head off to a property I now own. It has some nice restaurants nearby so if you are interested I'd like to take you to dinner. Then we could head back to my house and I can try to do as good a job on you just did for me." Harry said.

Lilith's face lit up like a batch of the Twins fireworks. "I'd love to Harry! I haven't been to a nice restaurant since last summer." She looked shyly down at her scuffed shoes, "Harry...I would love to go to bed with you but...I'm a virgin just so you know so I probably won't be much fun compared to what you are used too."

Harry reached out and lifted her chin and gave her a smile, "Lilith as much as this might surprise you until yesterday I was a virgin myself. No worries! This isn't a contest and if there is anything I learned while teaching the D.A. last year is no matter what skill level a person has, good intentions go along way. I'm sure you'll be brilliant. I, for one, would like to see what you have under those robes! You've certainly filled out since the last time I saw you!"

Lilith couldn't help but to blush again and give a goofy smile. How is it that Harry could blatantly be looking down her cleavage and obviously thinking dirty thoughts and yet be so different from that bastard George Weasley? The look in the raven-haired wizard's eye made her want to tear off her clothes and let him have his way with her right here, her job and poverty be damned!

Yet Lilith had been sorted into Hufflepuff for a reason so she controlled herself and squared her shoulders. "Well Lord Po...err...I mean Black, let's get these measurements and get your new cloak ready, shall we?" she said with a sly smile. Lilith was thankful that she had finished taking those measurements before the bulge in Harry's pants had been too enticing to pass up. Of course Harry hadn't blinked when she had said she needed to measure his penis considering he wasn't there to buy trousers! After his trousers had hit the floor all pretense had gone out the window that was for sure!

"Certainly Ms. Moon! I know the store will be closing soon and I wouldn't want to impose on you!" Harry said with a smirk of his own.

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Narcissa gave a sigh as her body tingled with the after-effects of another orgasm the likes of which she had never dreamed was possible. The pleasure seemed to just encompass her and fill her up, coming from everywhere and nowhere all at once. It was indescribably wonderful! She felt her body relaxing as she came down from her high and she sagged against the wall of the dressing cubicle she was in. Her own juices were sticky on her fingers and her bosom still heaved with from panting.

She had stationed herself there because it was right up against the wall of the room where Harry had been getting measured by the pretty witch who turned out to be a classmate of Harry's. When it became apparent to her that Harry wasn't going to be able to resist having some sort of sex with the girl, she left so as to not cramp his style but she was pleased she was able to be near enough to reap the benefit of the young witch's actions. Thank Merlin the dressing rooms weren't across the room!

Narcissa smiled at the low and very satisfied moan which came from the dressing room next to hers. For all her professionalism Tonks had forgotten to use a silencing charm like she had. Luckily for her she hadn't screamed out as Narcissa couldn't help but do. Maybe occasionally diddling oneself quietly was a way to combat boredom on a stakeout. What ever the reason, Narcissa knew that Tonks had finally figured out about Harry's aura and had positioned herself when the young auror had felt it beginning to intensify.

Listening to the sounds of Tonks' fingers as they had gone in and out of her wet cunt had been quite the arousing add-on to the pleasure being transmitted through Harry's aura. While the thought of sex with her niece wasn't appealing (now matter how sexy the young woman was) the sound made Narcissa think back to happy memories of when Selene Ollivander had finger-fucked her into bliss as she helped Narcissa learn how to pleasure herself. Remembering the look in that lovely blonde's eye as she had smiled as Narcissa had helplessly cum under her expert fingers never failed to excite her. Oh how she along many other girls had cried when they learned that Selene was transferring to Beauxbatons for her sixth and seventh years! So as not to taint the memory with over-use, once or twice a year Narcissa would view some of those memories in the pensieve at Malfoy Manor. She'd be able to relieve those wonderful nights back at Hogwarts when she had been happy.

While the age difference between her and Harry didn't bother her, she wondered at how much she was looking forward to meeting Selene's daughter who was a mere fifteen! She knew she was probably dooming herself to disappointment by projecting her memories of the mother onto the daughter but Harry had said Luna was a true daughter to Selene. Narcissa couldn't help but hope that Luna would have the same passions that her mother had which had driven Narcissa wild when she was back at Hogwarts. Even if the young girl was a half or even a quarter of the lover her mother had been Narcissa would be ecstatic.

Through the thin walls she could hear Nymphadora hadn't been satisfied with the 'power orgasm' but had continued to masturbate. Narcissa quickly cast a silencing charm shaped so that she could hear what was going on but the rest of the shop would not. She smiled as she could hear her niece moaning, "Yeah...oh yeah...right there...yeah! Ohhh yes right there! I love it when you do that! Oh you're so good to me!" Even though Narcissa was quite satiated and satisfied, she couldn't help but feel an erotic twinge growing due to knowing Tonks was obviously thinking of Harry doing her. She was actually surprised that her niece had been able to keep from hustling Harry off into an alley and shagging him while they had been out shopping after lunch. Narcissa herself certainly hadn't been able to keep from practically dragging him on top of her back at the Black vault.

Not realizing she was giving her aunt an impromptu sex show, Tonks kept fingering her clit with one hand as she finger-fucked herself steadily with the other. She needed the release. Following Harry around all afternoon shopping had been sheer torture for her. Watching him try on clothes, imagining him taking the on and off, thinking of his body taunt with muscles toned from Quidditch. Thinking about his marvelous arse! Oh Tonks had so wanted to grab that arse and pull Harry into her! At the last shop she had to leave the store or else she'd have lost it and shagged him right there in the shop. Bad enough that her aunt kept giving her knowing glances.

It amazed her and sort of grossed her out at first but now Tonks couldn't help but think of Harry and Narcissa together and the image turned her on. She knew they had been fucking back in Gringotts. It explained what had happened to her. If Harry's aura made her horny, him having an orgasm would surely make her cum, right? She cursed herself for not going down to the vaults with Harry. Thinking

back now about how Narcissa and her clothes looked when they had returned should have clued her in right then that the pair had shagged again! She was just six years older than Harry yet her aunt had just swept in and tasted Harry twice in one day! It wasn't fair!

Worse Tonks had lost out again to some sort of sex to an ickle Firstie! Sure Lilith was Harry's age but Tonks remembered her from her own Seventh Year in Hufflepuff House. While most upper classmen except the prefects ignored the younger kids, Tonks was personable so a lot of the younger students found it easy to talk to her and ask her questions. It grated on Tonks that a fellow 'Puff was enjoying what should be hers! She was a Black right? Shouldn't her new lord be looking out for her needs? That made her think of her and Harry acting out some Lord and Scullery Maid fantasy which drove Tonks over the edge again, crying out Harry's name as she came.

In the next booth over, Narcissa wasn't far behind her. Between the happy feeling Harry was projecting and listening to the erotic sounds her niece had been making had Narcissa having another go at herself. She couldn't keep her hands from wandering and so in short order she came hard and fast imagining what Tonks was thinking Harry was doing to her. Narcissa tried to catch her breath as she marveled at the day. She had barely had any sort of sexual contact after marrying Lucius. If Narcissa hadn't had trouble getting pregnant at first she probably would have ended up being able to count on one had the amount of times Lucius would have had sex with her. Now, in one day, she had had sex twice and better solitary sex than she had ever been able to do on her own back at Malfoy Manor. She shivered at the thought of what the coming days would be filled with!

CAMDEN TOWN, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – EVENING

Lilith was practically skipping along side Harry and Tonks. Her day had started out like any other of late and was ending like something out of her dreams. Maybe dreams could come true after all! So far everything that had happened since Harry Potter of all people had walked into the shop seem to bear that out.

It had been a fun outing. After finishing up and paying for his cloak, Harry had waited around until Lilith had gotten off work. She had never cleaned so fast. Even the queer looks Helene and Morgan

gave her didn't phase here. Of course the two girls were still chatting about the weird feelings they had been having earlier. Lilith had found it hard not to laugh at this.

After she was finished the group had apparated to a residential section in Camden Town under disillusionment charm. Lilith could tell that Harry didn't like side-along apparition anymore than she did. Auror Tonks had complimented her over that fact she hadn't puked like the older Hufflepuff had done her first time.

Harry had met with some goblins that did a ritual Lilith didn't know. She had gasped when suddenly the house she had been looking at just sort of faded. Seconds later she had completely forgotten it had been there in the first place till Harry had leaned in and whispered an address to her. She gloried in the kiss he had left on her cheek after he had done so.

They had gone in and Lilith had been frankly shocked by the place. It seemed like something you'd expect in a Horror House at a fun-fair. Harry had looked sheepish and explained the previous owners hadn't been all that nice. The older statuesque woman had laughed at this. Lilith had had a hard time wrapping her mind around the fact that not only was Harry Lord Black (and preferred that title over Lord Potter) but the lady with him was Draco Malfoy's mum of all people! Sure she was just Narcissa Black again due to some sort of magical divorce but she was still Draco's mum!

Lilith had been glad to leave the gloomy house. One of the oddest house elves she'd ever seen had assured Harry that the house would be clean soon and the master bedroom was already spotless and ready as were the guest rooms. The elf had also said something about a 'creature' being taken care of. Harry had thanked the weird elf and he had led her and Tonks back out into Muggle London. Draco's mum had begged off and Lilith was glad. She was Draco Malfoy's mum! It was hard to take in.

Harry had led them to a nice Italian restaurant called Salvitino's where they had the best dinner Lilith had had in ages! Of course she really hadn't had a decent meal since she had left Hogwarts at the end of last year's term. Thinking of this really depressed her. So had telling her story of what had happen to her. Harry had been very interested and had also teased out what had happened to her friend

Sally-Anne. Lilith's heart had skipped a beat when she had overheard Harry murmur to himself how the Twins would pay.

It was sad that they had to sort of rush through dinner but Auror Tonks had been a bit ill-at-ease and had worried about security. She had reminded Harry that since his godfather's death, Grimmauld Place had become visible so that the Death Eaters would remember it and probably stake it out. Lilith listened with wide eyes as she found out that mass-murder Sirius Black had been Harry's godfather, had been innocent and had died in a battle with Death Eaters. That and He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named was indeed alive again. Harry, she was relieved to see, seem to accept Tonks' concerns but didn't seem overtly worried. In fact Lilith was struck by the confidence and power he exuded. It washed over her and energized her. It also made her want him even more.

She thought about this as they made their way back to Grimmauld Place. As scary as the place was it had that gothic feel that just screamed that the master bedroom would be regal and there would be a huge four-poster bed there. Could it be true that not only did her prince charming show up by she'd give herself to a man for the first time in such a fantasy setting? She was practically giddy with anticipation! It seemed infectious with Harry laughing and obviously enjoying himself. Even Auror Tonks couldn't help but pick up the mood.

So it was as they rounded the corner and turned up the street where Harry's house was that she sort of skipped ahead. She gave a twirl and a laugh. Harry too laughed at her antics. As she looked at him with his adorable lop-sided grin, she was warmed by the thought that soon he'd be inside her, claiming her, making her a woman, a noise caught her attention.

At first she thought it was just a cat leaping of a trash bin. Yet as she towards the direction of the sound she saw a dark shape emerge out of the shadows. The shape moved quickly moved and into the light cast by the streetlights came an arm holding a wand.

Avada Kedavra!

In an instant Lilith had two thoughts. The first was the realization that the death curse was almost the exact color of Harry's eyes. The

second was the absurdity that this comparison was going to be her last thought before she died.

XxXxX

A/N: I'd like to thank everyone who has put me on their story alerts and made me a favorite author and such. My ego thanks you too! I am going to try to keep updating as fast as I can but I am suffering from a bit of allergy headaches of late and coming off a bout of really bad tennis elbow. That and I am a full-time student and occasionally sort of have to do some homework. Plus I'm the house husband so cooking, cleaning and taking care of The-Cat-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed takes a lot of time as well.

Writer as a bastard: I've often said that I dislike writers who can never give their characters a break. I mean you have to be a sadist at heart to keep slamming poor old Peter Parker. I mean every time anything good happens to Spider-Man it always seems something bad (twice that of what was good) soon followed. I kept feeling worse and worse as I wrote the beginning of this chapter as I plotted out the sad, unhappy life of Lilith Moon. Worse, as I reread it, I kept finding new ways to make the story sadder and more depressing. By the end of the chapter I had gotten rather depressed because I felt like a prick for dumping on this poor girl. What did she ever do to me?

Pub Name: I take no credit for the name. I got it here...which is an URL doesn't seem to want to show. I did a Google search for "odd pub names" and I'm pretty sure it was on of the top three pics.

Synchronicity: It's nice when things work out. Hogwarts was supposedly founded 1,000 ago and the Battle of Hastings was in 1066 so Godric of Griffin's Moor could easily have been Harold Godricson's great-uncle.

Samuel Smith: I was enjoying one of their oatmeal stouts while finalizing this chapter. Ahhh, beer!

Weasley's Wizard Wheezes: Okay I admit to changing the name. I never understood it...ever. I mean I can sort of see Wheezes as in gasping for air after laughing so hard. However I always took it much more like the meaning you get from having some sort of lung ailment. Look up Wheeze on Wikipedia and that's exactly what you get.

Wheezing is something you do when you have tuberculosis! So I changed it. Sure Whizzes sounds like either taking a leak or in the UK whizz is slang for amphetamines but I was thinking more as in whiz-bang! Plus with the way the Twins are maybe amphetamines aren't too far off the mark! Plus there is also the movie The Whiz that might have influenced how I saw the word.

Update the First! In a review, Sauron-the-Dark pointed out, "...but in an older piece of British slang for a really good joke is "wizard wheeze". I always figured that's where JKR got it from." That makes sense to me. However, as much as that makes sense, it still sounds like the Twins are selling some sort of cough medicines.

Update the Second! I forgot to mention that while I'm going with the look of Helen McCrory for Narcissa from the movies the flip side is she looks much too old. Especially when you consider that Bellatrix looks younger even though she's older in the book AND has been in Azkaban for the last 13-14 years. Again Narcissa is only 41! Hell there are actresses I'm sure a lot of 16yo's would jump at who are between the ages of 40-50. I mean Demi Moore was 41 when she was in Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle and she looked pretty tasty in that. Plus witches have a lot more to 'cheat' to keep looking good. Oh, I've already had one reviewer catch me referring to her as a blonde. Please let me know if I do it again.

CHAPTER SEVEN – THE SERPENT AND THE PHOENIX

BLUFF OVERLOOKING TOR BAY, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – MID-AFTERNOON

The sound of the waves crashing upon the rocks soothed Voldemort's nerves. At night he would often go out alone and look out over Tor Bay and think. That he was doing it with the sun bright in the sky just illustrated how much was on Voldemort's mind. One would think that for someone who had cheated Death quite a few times he would be pretty happy with his fate. However Lord Voldemort had never been one to ever be satisfied with the hand that had been dealt to him by fickle Fate. He felt if life was just a cosmic game of cards then those who didn't try to stash an ace up one's sleeves were fools. So even before the day Albus Dumbledore had walked into his room back at the orphanage to tell him he was a wizard, Voldemort had worked to rig the 'game' his way.

Rules were for people willing to be told what to do, what to think and how to act. Such things weren't for those who truly had power and the vision to use it. Voldemort even rebelled against the very biological hand everyone was dealt, be they Magical or Muggle. At the first opportunity he had taken all the base desires that did nothing but distract people from the important things in life and had exiled them into his first horcrux. There had been times when Voldemort felt something like a whisper of regret at the loss of his good looks. However who needed looks when you had power and one had no need to catch the eye of a witch anyway?

Everything seemed to go Voldemort's way at first. His first coup had been discovering the fabled Chamber of Secrets and unleashing the Basilisk and then framing that oaf Hagrid for the death of Myrtle Elkins. Then he had discovered the secret to gaining immortality itself when he discovered the secret of the horcrux. Then he was able to create two of horcruxes under the very nose of the suspicious Dumbledore! He had practically dared old man to stop him as he recruited many of his future Death Eaters before leaving Hogwarts. Voldemort found that the witches and wizards of England obviously didn't have the mettle the Muggle Irish had since with just a dash of threats, murders, carefully staged assassinations and the occasional explosive destruction of a cherished landmark Voldemort and his Death Eaters had brought Magical Britain to its knees.

As much as Voldemort cared nothing for Muggles and let his Death Eaters indulge in their sport killings of them, he sneered at how your average post-War Briton, with their stiff up-lipped attitude, could easily tough out things that would bring the average wizard crying to the heavens at the unfairness of it all. While he used them, Voldemort never doubted how many of his minions were petty and weak. This suited Voldemort just fine since if they weren't they might become a threat to him and his plans.

Voldemort found it interesting that his biggest threat from within his own ranks came in the form of Narcissa Malfoy. However she was easily checked by her husband's stupidity in underestimating subtlety in favor of the overt use of force. Voldemort often wondered how many of his Death Eaters made it into his beloved Slytherin House considering the lack of cunning they often showed. So with his followers content with the crumbs he allowed them, Voldemort had felt he was well on his way to achieving all of his plans to take over magical Britain and run it as his personal kingdom till he grew tired of it.

Then Harry Potter entered his life.

As much as Voldemort tried to stack the deck of Life, he knew the dangers inherent in the currents of magic. One didn't delve into the dark reaches of magic like Voldemort had without realizing such dangers. It might stoke the ego to think he would be the wizard to beat the odds but Voldemort had read of far too many past witches and wizards who were stuck down by the hubris of thinking it couldn't happen to them. So when Severus Snape came stumbling in with the scraps of a prophecy regarding one who might rise up to challenge him, he acted quickly.

He had planned to use the death of the Potter boy to create his last horcrux. Then he would have his magical number five along with the added imagery of the four elements along with the unifying element of Spirit. A powerful magical combination of imagery and symbolism and one Voldemort was proud of. Plus, who else but he, Lord Voldemort was willing to go the distance needed to achieve such an accomplishment?

After killing the Potters, Voldemort had plans for the Longbottom boy. He wasn't sure how he would circumvent the prophecy but he had a

ghost of an idea. Hadn't Oedipus fulfilled his own prophecy by unknowingly killing his sire? Voldemort felt he could raise the boy as his own, watching him and guiding him. It might be possible that the boy would 'vanquish' him in a way that had nothing to do with overthrowing him. Certainly there was a risk that the boy would try to supplant him but prophecies were slippery things. He just needed to learn the full prophecy before he settled on his final plan.

As Voldemort squinted into the sunlight as he tried to read the name of a passing sail boat, he wished that he had listened to something Bellatrix LeStrange had said that fateful afternoon on that Samhain back in 1981. He wished it somehow had made him question his own reasoning one more time.

It had been a simple question and one asked not to imply Voldemort's reasoning might have been wrong. She had only asked why her team was being sent to the Longbottoms to grab the child there instead of the Potters. She was curious as to how her lord Dark Lord had picked the Longbottom boy over the Potter one. That his choice might be wrong was obviously something Bellatrix could not even conceive of due to her faith in her dread lord.

Voldemort ground his teeth at the memory at how he had confidently pointed out the numerology and other omens pointed to the Longbottom boy over the child of the Potters. He had dismissed Bellatrix's agreement due to her feeling that the boy's mother being a mudblood made it more likely that Voldemort was right about the Longbottom boy. Considering how Voldemort was more of a 'mudblood' than the Potter in light of Voldemort's own Muggle father, his lineage hadn't figured into it. The decision had been made after long hours of feverish Arithmancy calculations and other omen readings.

Calculations or not, it was something about the Potter boy that had caused his curse to fail which resulted in his original body being destroyed. What had it been about the boy? He had told the Harry Potter and his remaining followers that night in the graveyard that it had been a spell powered by his mother's love that had protected him. A form of old magic he had not prepared for.

Yet in the weeks that followed the boy escaping him, Voldemort had begun to question that. If his disembodiment had been due to a charm cast by Lilly Potter like all evidence pointed too then the

power was not something innate to the boy. The prophecy stated the one with the power to vanquish him had been born as the seventh month died. Thus the old magic Lily Potter had used which caused the curse to rebound had nothing to do with the prophecy! Thus the power in the child born in July was still unknown. Indeed the very identity of that child was suspect.

Even with Potter defeating him in his first year, destroying his first horcrux his second year, escaping him his fourth year still did not mean Harry Potter was the one who had the power to defeat him. No matter how obvious it seemed that Potter was the child of the prophecy, Voldemort knew he could not risk such thinking. Until he knew the contents of entire prophecy Voldemort he was essentially boxing in the dark.

Thus he had turned his energies into finding what the full prophecy said. Without knowing it he could very well be causing it to unfold. It had happened far too often in magical history and in legends past. Fighting against a prophecy was always a dangerous course of action. Yet Voldemort was committed now considering he had already taken action. Worse, it was his plans to trick Harry Potter into fetching the prophecy for him which was almost his undoing.

Oh how he regretted taunting Dumbledore and then diving into Harry Potter in hopes of goading the Old Man into killing the boy! At the time he had thought of it in a flash of inspiration. If Dumbledore killed Potter and not himself, it might change how the prophecy was unfolding. It would certainly prove that it was indeed Neville Longbottom who was actually the threat as he had calculated long ago. At first the possession had been like any other. Voldemort had destroyed many a mind in this fashion, his victim's backs often breaking via the contortions of the pain he inflicted upon them. Yet in an instant that had all changed.

Instead of being in control, Voldemort had felt what an ant might feel while being hoovered up by a maid cleaning the floor. His mind, his soul, his very sense of self had felt like it was caught in a hurricane. Even though he still had two horcruxes left, he felt like he was dying as his life literally seemed to flash before his mental eyes. It had taken every ounce of his magical strength to break the connection and use his emergency portkey to flee back to the caverns under his father's ancestral home where his base was hidden.

Ever since then Voldemort had been hard pressed to keep up the charade that he was still firmly in control of things. He was, in fact, practically a wreck. His body still ached and he felt...empty. Even after splitting his soul three times, he had never felt like this. Voldemort had put off making the fourth horcrux since his first had been destroyed and he wasn't sure about trying the ritual again in his new body. Two horcruxes was still one more than had ever been made after all.

Weakened in spirit as he was Voldemort had decided that he needed to lie low. He still needed to grow the Death Eater ranks and recruit old and new allies. Voldemort had to admit that as much as the fiasco at the Department of Ministries had been he was glad Lucius Malfoy was in Azkaban. While Voldemort had been a mere shade without a body, Lucius had gone far to control magical Britain through intrigue, bribes and blackmail. The fact that this was all due to the plots and plans of his wife Narcissa was a bit of a break for him. If his Death Eaters ever got wind of his weakness they might wonder why they needed him. Why not follow Lucius who was practically the shadow Minister of Magic instead?

Voldemort cursed the fact he had been unable to add some sort of loyalty charm to the Dark Mark but there hadn't been anyway to make it work. He could have made the loyalty charms work but then he wouldn't have had the Mark work as a conduit where he could subtly draw strength from his followers. This had been needed as an extra precaution he took since he was going to make multiple horcruxes. The power flowing from his followers would strengthen his soul or otherwise he would have been a mere whisper on the wind if his body was destroyed. Being less than a ghost was not the sort of immortality Voldemort craved!

So having Lucius in prison kept the politically astute Narcissa Malfoy in check. As a witch there was only so much she could do considering the prejudices of the staid and conservative Wizengamot. Prison also kept the chief threat to his own power away from the whispered conversations of his Death Eaters as they discussed events in hushed tones. Fools! He was Lord Voldemort and he easily read their minds and saw their doubts, fears and their occasional wavering loyalty!

Voldemort wished he could co-opt Narcissa as a loyal servant but he knew she was repulsed by him. She was too useful to kill so he

settled for using her though Lucius. Happily Lucius was too much the egotistical fool to realize almost all of his success came from his wife. A woman he treated mostly with contempt and cheated on without any thought or remorse. She might as well have been like the house elf he had lost to Harry Potter for the amount of attention he had spared her. Sadly Lucius himself was too valuable to just have killed otherwise he might be tempted.

Of course there was always the fact that mad Bellatrix would never betray him. It was good that no matter how loyalties might shift, Voldemort knew he could count on her to carry out whatever order he gave her as her beloved Dark Lord. She'd commit suicide with a spoon if he ordered it! Her only flaw was her burning, unstoppable desire to have sex with him. This would never be, he knew. Voldemort couldn't even remember the last time he had had a 'dirty thought' much less an erection. Such things were for lesser men and mere beasts. For an immortal, what need of there was to have an heir? For all of Bellatrix's unquenchable need, Voldemort knew his own magical aura was more than enough to slake her desire to ensure her loyalty forever.

So as Voldemort looked out over Tor Bay, he considered his options. He hoped that with time his mental strength would return and he would figure out a way to deal with the emptiness in himself. There was no other way to explain it. He felt if he could give a shout inside himself the echo might last for hours. At least his magical core was as strong as ever. He would continue with the plan that Narcissa had created that Lucius had enacted so well while Voldemort had lacked a body but now the plan had been tailored to advance Voldemort's own agenda.

Once Voldemort overcame his current problems he would begin a more subtle campaign of terror. It had to be so until he could build up the ranks of the Death Eaters and rekindled old alliances with the dementors, vampires, giants and werewolves. The problem with this was these potential allies like to strike at Muggles who were less of a threat to them than Magicals.

Many of his followers felt that allowing this along with terror strikes against the Muggles might help to quicken their recruiting. So many recruits had swarmed to him long ago for the chance to strike at the Muggles but now he would have none of that. It was one thing to allow his Death Eaters their fun from time to time but if they started

killing Muggles in large numbers the European Confederation of Magical States and even the International Confederation of Wizards might get involved. As long as he kept it a low-key internal affair between Magicals, it was unlikely any of the magical international groups would interfere. Voldemort felt it all around him; he had to be cautious or he would fail.

His musings were interrupted by a silvery stoat that appeared next to him. It spoke in a silky-smooth voice. "My Lord, I have news of Harry Potter and Narcissa Malfoy that I am confident you will wish to hear. I stand ready to brief you." The message Patronus melted into nothingness. The voice had been that of Isaac Avery, one of his better plants within the Ministry.

With a crack Voldemort apparated to his 'war room' for want of a better word. Avery was already there and he quickly knelt as Voldemort made his way to his throne-like chair and sat. "What do you have for me Avery? I take it the Gringotts meeting regarding the disposition of House Black has ended?"

Avery bowed low, "Yes my lord. Lord Flint has reported the stunning news that not only has Draco Malfoy been denied becoming Lord Black but that Harry Potter was granted it! Somehow the brat must have been briefed for he was able to force a blood inheritance test. Not only did it show he had more of the blood of House Black through a previously unknown link through his mother, but he was also granted the title to the Ancient and Noble House of Peverell!"

If Voldemort still had eyebrows they would have shot skywards, "Peverell you say? If it wasn't for silly children's stories that House name would have been forgotten long ago! So Harry Potter is now the heir to not only one but three ancient houses. Interesting..." Voldemort stroked his chin and thought how this might affect his plans.

Avery waited patiently. While his lord had been much less willing to punish with the carelessly thrown Cruciatus curse since his rebirth, Avery was not one to push his luck. He still was fighting to keep from trembling considering he still hadn't told his lord the news about Lucius' wife. Avery didn't think he would take it well.

Voldemort finally looked up and his serpentine eyes seemed to pierce Avery's very soul. "Go on, Avery, what further news do you have? How does this concern Narcissa Malfoy?"

Avery bowed again, "My lord, after Harry Potter took on the mantle of Lord Black he was told as an emancipated Lord he could take on his Potter title as well. If you remember, my lord, I did report the rumors that Harry Potter would be blocked from being able to do this, possibly by Dumbledore in collusion with Minister Fudge himself. Whatever schemes they had were useless since due to the inheritance test it fell under the goblin's jurisdiction. I'm sure you are well aware of how they feel on the matter."

Voldemort nodded, "Yes they would rebel in a moment if they felt it would release more gold for them to play with. Well such is the danger in dealing with the goblins. Their contracts always seem to have an out for them. So Potter is finally Lord Potter; a lord of a gutted house."

Avery waited for Voldemort to stop laughing at that thought. "After Potter took up his title as Lord Potter. When this was done, it somehow magically broke Lady Malfoy's marriage. I spoke with one of the Unspeakables before coming here and apparently there is an ancient curse that lies between the Potter and Malfoy line that isn't common knowledge. Through Potter's control of both Houses, this curse caused Lady Malfoy's marriage to be dissolved. She is now just Narcissa Black once more. There is also the possibility that..." Avery paused, not sure how to break the news.

Voldemort barked, "None of this is your fault! Speak! I must know what has happened!"

Avery bowed again in relief. "My lord, the Unspeakable said there was a very good possibility the same fate may have befallen Lady Bellatrix since House LeStrange has always been allies to the Malfoys. In times past this curse had sometimes affected those allies. Normally in such situations the affect of the curse would be readily felt by those involved but..." again Avery's voice failed him.

Voldemort waved his hand dismissively, "Yes, yes I know why Bellatrix might not have felt it. It matters not. If it happened or not, we shall be able to learn of it when she and her team finally returns.

The matter can wait; her mission cannot. If we are to storm Azkaban we need the information she is gathering."

Voldemort thought of his insane lieutenant. If she had indeed been magically divorced it could become a problem considering she would be subject to some sort of control by Harry Potter as Lord Black. However if she hadn't felt the shift, it might be her insanity was shielding her from such magic. Voldemort was confident that if she had felt such magics on her she would have instantly returned, mission or not, begging to be allowed to punish the boy for his impertinence. If the curse hadn't affected her it then the point it was a moot point.

A wave of Voldemort's hand made Avery continue. "My lord, after the meeting Harry Potter and Lady Mal...I mean Ms. Black were seen leaving Gringotts accompanied by her auror niece Nymphadora Tonks."

Voldemort interrupted, "She's the pink-haired one in Dumbledore's Order, Andromeda's brat, correct?"

Avery nodded, "Yes my lord. Before they managed to disappear in the crowds of Diagon Alley after speaking with the press the boy said they had an afternoon of shopping ahead of them. None of my contacts have spotted them in the Alley but the crowds are busy today and none of my men knew they needed to be looking for a hidden Harry Potter."

Voldemort nodded, "So Potter was not immediately taken back to his 'detention' at Hogwarts, eh? yes? How curious are the stories coming out of the school, yes? Dumbledore seems to be getting sloppy since he doesn't seem to be able to control his Golden Boy anymore. Is Longbottom still at Hogwarts?"

"Yes my lord," Avery nodded. "While it is reported he is more confident after the fight at the Department of Mysteries, our spies do not report much new about him other than he has a wand of his own. Now that he is not using his father's old wand, it is reported his control of magic has noticeably increased. That increase, while powerful, is nothing out of the ordinary considering the circumstances."

Voldemort stood and walked over to a map of England, London and some other cities posted on the wall. His finger found a pin stuck into the London map. "Have a strike team stake out Grimmauld Place. Either Potter or Dumbledore or both are likely to show up there to have the Fidelius charm reapplied. I doubt from what Severus has said that the Old Man would give up his headquarters of the Order so easily."

Thinking of the implications of such a rift between his two enemies gave Voldemort an idea. "It won't matter if the team gets there after the charm is reapplied. With the Fidelius charm broken with Potter becoming the new Lord Black, the house's floo network will be broken as well for at least three days so no one will be able to enter via that route. Have the strike team ready to detect disillusioned wizards after they apparate in. It is likely they will apparate close by due to the need of having to be told the secret. Thus they will be vulnerable. If Potter and Dumbledore are still at odds it may be that a large number of Order members and Potter's friends show up to lean on the boy as well as appeal to his emotions and loyalties. Dumbledore can't afford for the so called Chosen One to be running off his leash."

The more Voldemort thought of this the more he liked it. "This is an excellent opportunity so make sure the team is well led! However do not have too many of our more valuable members in it. With the possibility of the Old Man showing up I don't want to lose anyone I can't afford to with our ranks thin with so many still in Azkaban. Besides we have many new to the Mark who need to be properly blooded," the Dark Lord said with satisfaction.

"As you command, my lord!" Avery said as he stood. He was halfway from turning and rushing out the door when a thought occurred to him. "My lord, what of Narcissa Black? Do you wish her captured or killed? Similarly what is your wish regarding Harry Potter? If he shows, do you still wish him to be taken unharmed and brought to you as per your standing orders?"

Voldemort shook his head, still looking at the map, "No. Instruct the team to kill everyone they can. With Potter as the new Lord Black, Narcissa is compromised. She cannot be allowed to live. The same goes as well for Potter; kill him if he shows. If possible they are to retrieve Potter's body so we can have it properly displayed later to maximize the terror aspect as well as demoralization factor. If this

isn't possible, try to have the body mangled or otherwise defiled. I've wasted too much time on the boy. No more games or plots; I just want him dead."

"It shall be done, my lord!" Avery said before leaving to carry out his orders.

Voldemort returned to his throne, lost in thought. Yes, he just wanted the boy dead. He would never admit it, even to himself, but however politically or psychologically important it was that he himself kill Harry Potter, the truth was Voldemort feared to go near Harry Potter ever again.

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HEADMASTER'S OFFICE, HOGWARTS, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996
– LATE AFTERNOON

Albus Dumbledore was annoyed. It was, he admitted, a state he had found himself in quite often ever since that first day of term. Certainly he had been right put out when Harry had practically destroyed his office after his godfather had died. However Dumbledore had been a teacher for a long time and had seen to often what hormonally driven teenagers could do with accidental magic to really be surprised by the outburst.

Of late Dumbledore felt that he was taking two steps backwards for every step forward as the saying went. At first plans going back to end of the First War had been going well. This was even in the face of being drawn out over years and years. Certainly there had been hiccups along the way but for the most part Dumbledore had been content with how things had unfolded since those dark days of the First War. However things had started to go pear shaped ever since Sirius Black had escaped from Azkaban.

After that it had been one disaster after another. Dumbledore had done everything in his power to get Sirius captured and thrown back in prison. For years Dumbledore had the Werewolf dealt with through Severus. Amazing what mind charms one can do on a werewolf under the affects of the Wolfsbane potion! This was just as well because Remus could have been as much of a threat to his plans as Sirius represented; the former Marauders knew too much

and would ask too many questions that couldn't be allowed to be asked.

When Snape had captured Sirius, Dumbledore had been ecstatic! Not only was this another way to prove to the suspicious that Snape had indeed given up his Death Eater past, all of the students involved had been injured and so were in the Infirmary. Dumbledore had locked them in and went off to ensure Sirius Black was given the Dementor's kiss. Then he would return and work on the memories of the children so they would forget all that they had been told. Remus could be easily be controlled when the full moon rose again the next night and have his memories altered as well. Thus a potential disaster had turned almost into a coup!

Then Sirius escaped again! Even more incredibly he did it on the hippogriff that itself had somehow escaped execution earlier in the day. Dumbledore had not made a big deal of it at the time since he considered that Hagrid had somehow arranged it. The half-giant might be as thick as an ox but he had many uses. Thus he had covered for his groundskeeper and soothed Fudge's irate nerves at the time. Soon the news of Black's capture swept any previous issues out of the Minister's head. Fudge was always sensitive to public opinion and he had been terrified that the first Azkaban break-out (of a mass-murder no less!) happened during his term.

How Sirius had escaped, Dumbledore never knew and Sirius never told him. If Sinestra hadn't gotten a glimpse of Black on the hippogriff as he flew by the Astronomy Tower, Dumbledore wouldn't have even known how Sirius had fled Hogwarts. It had been a lucky day indeed when Sirius Black had contacted him, his concern for Harry evident. Dumbledore had acted quickly to draw him back to England so he could find out what Sirius knew or suspected. That the ex-con was willing to do this had given Dumbledore hope that the situation could be salvaged.

Dumbledore soon found, however, that even his formidable occlumency skill was useless in the face of the mental shields Sirius had constructed over the years to fight off the effects of the dementors. So while Sirius Black had willingly ensnared himself back into Dumbledore's web, the wizard could not be sure of Black's intent or plans.

So Dumbledore had used every trick and dodge he knew to keep the man off balance. Dumbledore had worked tirelessly to check-mate him whenever he tried to work with Harry Potter in ways that would upset Dumbledore's carefully laid plans. It had been tiring and often very frustrating work for Sirius Black had years of pent up rage and regret to purge and thus was hard to keep under control.

Luckily for Dumbledore he had Minerva McGonagall on his side. She had never been truly happy with him over the years; she fought him constantly over his plans. For all her Scot stubbornness, though, the formidable witch had always come through for him. Dumbledore was thankful that in the fight against Voldemort he had her as opposed to the Dark Lord's Bellatrix LeStrange. For all of the insane witch's power, she was easily outmatched by Minerva talents in planning and cool reasoning.

It had been Minerva who had artfully designed the plan to use a combination of loyalty, guilt, misdirection and a dash of Molly's potions to direct Sirius down pathways he had to be led. Her skills in this never failed to amaze Dumbledore. When he would compliment her on her prodigious abilities, she always dismissed it as skills any witch with grandchildren had. As terrible the loss of the McGonagall's family during the First War had been, Dumbledore had to admit it forged his most potent weapon against Voldemort. For all her fights with him over the years, McGonagall had never waived in her tireless war against Voldemort and his Dark allies.

However for all of Minerva's most excellent plans things had not gone well at the Department of Mysteries. Little did Voldemort know that the Order of the Phoenix knew exactly what the Dark Lord had been trying to do by projecting images into Harry's mind. Dumbledore felt that for all his power that Voldemort's rebirth had addled him somewhat. Had he forgotten that Dumbledore and even his supposed servant Snape were power legimens? Dumbledore had easily read out the images Voldemort had projected into Harry's mind.

So while the Dark Lord had thought to use Harry to retrieve the prophecy, Dumbledore and the Order worked to use the inevitable confrontation as an ambush. With so few followers at his disposal after his rebirth, Voldemort was vulnerable. By taking out as many of remaining Death Eaters as possible the Order would seriously hamper Voldemort's plans and damage his image as an

unstoppable force. Dumbledore had hoped that Voldemort himself could be tempted out into the open. The Ministry needed to shown that the Dark Lord had indeed risen again!

Dumbledore cursed the Ministry and the Wizengamot both. Both bodies where packed with Death Eater sympathizers, Pureblood supremacists and just plain lazy witches and wizards. Oh how they raged and bleated during the First War as their world was falling apart around them. Did any of them do anything about it? No! Unable to get the government to do anything as Chief Warlock, it had fallen upon him to create the Order of the Phoenix to fight the rising dark tide.

Dumbledore had to fund it as well. There were plenty of galleons to be had in the Ministry and Wizengamot for bribes, pork barrel projects, nights out with their mistress or to pay for the latest exotic whore to entertain a Ministerial 'retreats' but not a Knut for security! If it hadn't been for the amazing generosity of Neoptolemus Lovegood the war against Voldemort would have not been possible. Neoptolemus' tenacity as a fighter was legendary but it was his willingness to practically bankrupt his House in fighting for the Light made him even more the hero in Dumbledore's eyes. That Dumbledore could not even get House Lovegood compensated after the war was another black mark against the Ministry and Wizengamot in the old wizard's eye.

How history repeated itself, Dumbledore thought ruefully! Again both the Ministry and Wizengamot acted as if their vaults were empty when it came to the need for expanding the aurors corps, to pay for informants, upgraded training as well as galleons to combat the bribes being used by the Death Eaters and their allies. No, again the Ministry officials beg off that the public wouldn't stand for any higher taxes. The Wizengamot acted like it wouldn't release a Knut unless Voldemort apparated into the chamber and dueled the Chief Warlock himself. Dumbledore actually wished that would happen; there were many in that august body that Dumbledore would have 'accidentally' kill during the cross-fire if such a duel were to happen.

So again Dumbledore and the Order of the Phoenix were left to shoulder the burden of fighting the Dark Lord alone...and having to pay for it. Again Minerva had come through for him by spotting something he himself had missed. After she was told of the prophecy she pointed out that since Harry Potter wasn't expected to

survive then Dumbledore could use the wealth of House Potter to fund the Order. So with a heavy heart, Dumbledore set in motion the plans that broke House Potter.

It pained the old man to do this but what other choice did he have? Dumbledore had practically killed Harry's parents himself as well as driving Neville's parents insane. The 'Chosen One' had to be identified and quickly. As magical Britain was falling to the Dark Lord's forces all around them, Dumbledore could not afford to wait.

The prophecy had no timeline. It was very possible that Voldemort would win and the child of prophecy would defeat him years if not decades later. If Dumbledore would have to act as Merlin to the child and spirit him away for training like a new King Arthur, he needed to know as soon as possible. He already had a spot picked out in Ireland if this became necessary.

That the prophecy easily implied that Voldemort was going to rule Britain till the Marked Child could defeat him ate at Dumbledore constantly. Every time he looked out at the loyal faces of his Order he felt a twinge inside. How many of his brave fighters would survive the coming loss to Voldemort? Would he manage to save as many as he could so they could help him tutor the child to be a new King Arthur who would one day free magical Britain from Voldemort's grip? Or would they all go down to death, ground down by Voldemort's forces?

It was these thoughts that drove Dumbledore to his most risky gambit. He had to force Voldemort to mark the Chosen One as soon as possible so Dumbledore could save as many of his Order as possible. It meant that he would have to sacrifice some for the Greater Good but what other choice did he have?

Fate seemed to smile on Dumbledore the night the cowardly Severus Snape had come stumbling back to Hogwarts begging for sanctuary. He had botched too many missions and had too many enemies among the Death Eaters. His life was forfeit and he knew it. That some of the Death Eaters had turned on Severus did not surprise Dumbledore; Snape had practically no social skills as a student and age hadn't taught him any differently. He was, to his core, a coward who never could do anything more than bemoan how Life supposedly had mistreated him.

It was from this coward's mind that Dumbledore found that Voldemort knew part of the prophecy due to him! This was wonderful news since it meant that it was likely the Dark Lord would move against the two boys born as the seventh month died. All he had to do was use Snape to maneuver Voldemort into making his choice. That he knew knew of traitors such as Pettigrew made Dumbledore's plans all the easier.

So it was that Dumbledore created the 'double-agent' in Severus. Voldemort had accepted that Severus had concocted the scheme to play on Dumbledore's widely known feelings on redemption to gather intelligence on the Order. Considering what Dumbledore knew Voldemort thought of him it was a very plausible scenario. So Snape was forgiven his trespasses and protected against reprisals from the other Death Eaters by Voldemort himself. So with information fed to Voldemort through his new pawn Dumbledore's plans went into motion.

Those plans all come together that Samhain night in 1981. How apt that so many died on the night when the veil between the worlds was at its thinnest. As the sun rose over Britain the next morning of All Saint's Day there were far less witches and wizards among the living. Dumbledore's teams used as feints and counter-ambushers had done their jobs but at a terrible cost. Neoptolemus Lovegood's entire team had been wiped out even if they had taken out a far larger force of Death Eaters with them. The Potters were dead and the Longbottoms, while alive, probably would long for death if they had the mental capability to do so after what Bellatrix LeStrange had done to them. Even so, all of Death Eater on that team had been killed or captured and sent to Azkaban. Dumbledore never liked that dementors were used as prison guards but he couldn't help but smile when thinking of Bellatrix who had been captured having to constantly relive the very horrors she had inflicted on others.

Even worse was since so many Order members had been actively involved in missions that night, few had been left to guard the families of the Order. Thus except for Minerva who had been at his side that night, House McGonagall was slaughtered from the doddering old Hermes McGonagall down to the youngest babe in arms. There were days that Dumbledore was amazed Minerva hadn't thrown herself off the battlements of Hogwarts when the news reached her. Her grief had been like an open wound and her sorrow bled out in a torrent of woe.

Voldemort had been defeated but Dumbledore knew the Dark Lord was not destroyed. Truly Dumbledore cursed his own stupidity at how he somehow had completely failed to notice that Tom Riddle had managed to create the darkest magical artifact one could make right under his nose while a student at Hogwarts. However the evidence at Godric's Hollow proved he had done so. If Voldemort's killing curse had truly rebounded, his body would not have been destroyed as it had. The Dark Lord would return but now Dumbledore knew which child would die defeating him for good.

In a stroke of luck Sirius Black had taken off after the traitor Pettigrew. In the ensuing duel Pettigrew seemed to have been killed and the deaths of all the Muggles had allowed the necessity of tossing Sirius into Azkaban. Black knew too much to be given a chance to ask questions after looking back at what had happened in those last dark days of the War.

Dumbledore had covered his tracks as best as he could but there were too many clues that the Potters and Longbottoms had been set up floating around. Why neither family had been safe in their family estates protected by a Fidelius charm was just the biggest question out of many that could not be allowed to be answered. With Sirius in prison, Remus easily controlled and so many of his Order dead, Dumbledore was left with his inner circle of allies who knew the truth and had accepted the necessity of it. It was true some of them like the Weasleys expected to be rewarded for their loyalty but Dumbledore felt it was a price he had to pay for the Greater Good.

So he had made his plans for the future confrontation with Voldemort and had waited. Harry Potter lived with his relatives safe behind blood wards from any remaining Death Eaters looking for revenge in the Dark Lord's name. That he was growing up abused and miserable was troubling to the old man but there wasn't anything he could do about it really. Tom Riddle had been toughened by his time in the Muggle orphanage he grew up in so to would Harry Potter be tempered and thus forged into the weapon he was fated to be. It helped, Dumbledore found, to think of the boy less as a person and merely an extension of Fate.

Thus it had been easy in a way to set in motion the plans that broke House Potter. It hurt Dumbledore inside that such an Ancient and Noble House had to be brought low. However the line would die with

Harry anyway Dumbledore would remind himself. Better that its gold and possessions went to ensure that magical Britain didn't fall under the heel of an inhuman monster. So regardless of his feelings, Dumbledore had drawn his plans towards the destruction of House Potter.

Sadly an unintentional side-effect of this was the destruction of the Hogwarts Scholarship Fund. House Potter had managed the Fund as well as generously contributing to it for generation after generation. The Fund had been helping Muggleborns to afford an education since almost the 13th century. Its loss had been disastrous! Purebloods had cheered and Dumbledore's own allies all clamored to know how this could have been allowed to happen.

When he had confronted McGonagall about it she had frankly broken down into tears. She had been so busy, she had confessed, with dealing with the escape of Sirius Black that she had missed some critical moves that the Purebloods had made to break the Fund. As much of a disaster as it was, Dumbledore was shaken to his very magical core at seeing his best lieutenant so broken and defeated. The sight had made him worry about the possibility of defeat like nothing had ever done.

Minerva, however, like always had not gone down fighting. Once she had realized she had been outmaneuvered, she quickly had worked to pull the money out of the Fund into areas that would serve the Order or even into some of their personal vaults. She had glumly informed him that at the very least the money would not go into the coffers of the Death Eaters' allies.

Losing so many Muggleborn students was just another headache that running Hogwarts gave Dumbledore. He really wished he could turn the entire job over to Minerva but he had already delegated far too much to the witch already. She never complained however. In fact when Dumbledore would apologize for giving her this or that as an additional duty she often thanked him since it helped keep her mind off things.

Dumbledore knew that losing her husband, children and her grandchildren and the rest of House McGonagall was something that she had never really had recovered from. It was written all over her face considering she easily looked a decade or so older than

she should. Minerva herself often commented it was better for her to work herself hard than allow her Scots temper out through brooding.

Overworked or not, Dumbledore sometimes felt that Minerva was the only one at Hogwarts that truly put in a decent day of work. For being one of the primary magical schools in Europe, Dumbledore found it a headache to staff it properly. Dumbledore seemed saddled with the cast-offs of Britain except for the notable exceptions such as Pomona and Filius.

Of course even the pair had their issues. Pomona spent more time with her plants and writings than she did teaching. Her 'Gardener's Club' was just a thin excuse to have promising older students teach for her as well as take care of many of her experiments. Filius was so wrapped up in his choir and the clever projects of his 'Claws that he never noticed his House was filled with bullying and cruelty that could often put Slytherin's House to shame.

The rest of his staff was a mess. Minerva had assured him that she had done her best in trying to find qualified candidates for the school. Bad enough there was the curse on the DADA position but Minerva was convinced those who were truly qualified and had the ability to teach wouldn't touch the job with a 3 meter staff. It didn't help that the Board of Governor's acted as if their salaries were a massive strain on the Hogwarts budget so they couldn't even offer a decent amount to attract credible candidates. So it was that both he and Minerva would often commiserate over some 18 year old scotch at the unfairness of their position compared to the importance of Hogwarts to life in magical Britain.

So on days like today it was no wonder that Dumbledore found himself fuming as he sucked on a lemon drop to sooth his jangled nerves. It grated on the Headmaster he hadn't been allowed to attend the meeting to clear up the disaster House Black continued to be. For all the trouble Sirius' escape from Azkaban had been it was balanced by the fact he was the Lord Black. This allowed him access to the Black fortune and votes in the Wizengamot which had helped the Order a great deal. Every vote in the Wizengamot was needed these days even if it wasn't used.

Losing Sirius had been a disaster. Dumbledore had raged that Black had managed to weasel his way onto the team set to ambush the Death Eater's at the Department of Ministries. His cousin

Nymphadora was going to be doing shit details for the Order for decades to come if Dumbledore had any say on the matter...which he did. It was primarily due to her that Sirius was there to be struck down by Bellatrix.

Sometimes Dumbledore wondered if he was somehow he was paying for his sister Ariana's death in incremental ways throughout his long life. What were the odds that when Bellatrix managed to hit Sirius with a stunner that her cousin would be fighting right next to the Veil? If Sirius had been struck down by another Death Eater, Dumbledore could have accepted it but Bellatrix? Even married into the LeStrange family she was still a Black and therefore could not attack Sirius directly as he was the rightful Lord Black. The stunner she used was about the limit to what she could cast without causing terrible damage to her own magic for attacking the head of her house by blood. How cruel Fate could be that the force of her stunner pushed him into the Veil.

Losing Sirius meant House Black would fall to Draco Malfoy. This fact had demoralized the Order of the Phoenix terribly. Then a sort of reprieve had happened. Right before term had ended Draco had confidently been bragging about his upcoming status as the new Lord Black. The day after his birthday had brought a sullen and surly teen to breakfast at the Slytherin table. While he had indeed had been named Lord Black, the title had not completely gone through. This meant there was a potential challenge to his claim.

Who might pose a challenge to young Malfoy's claim was a mystery to everyone in the Order to include Dumbledore himself. The closest challenger was actually Harry Potter but even his claim through Dorea Black in addition to being named heir by Sirius' will was not enough to beat the patrilinear claim Draco could claim through Cygnus and Pollux Black.

That the claim was in contention left so many questions. Had Regulus somehow faked his death to the point that both Dumbledore and Voldemort had been tricked or there was some unknown bastard with a better claim floating around? With no answers to the questions involved Dumbledore go only allow the recalcitrant Harry Potter to the meeting. House Fenwick would also be present to act as Dumbledore's ears in the matter. They would press a claim via their own link through Callidora Black even though both they and Dumbledore knew it would fail. House Fenwick had a

better claim on House Longbottom if Neville should die before siring an heir than they did on House Black.

It was Reginald Fenwick, the wizard who almost certainly would become Lord Longbottom if something happened to Neville that Dumbledore was waiting for. There were times, Dumbledore had to admit, that he wished Neville would die in one of his many cauldron explosions simply so he could deal with Reginald instead of Augusta Longbottom. She was loyal to the Light but could also a colossal pain in the arse.

Finally his office floor flared and Reginald announced himself. Dumbledore quickly granted permission to come through. The younger wizard appeared and quickly wiped any trace of ash from his immaculately tailored cloak. Dumbledore smiled to himself. While Reginald was much easier to work with than Dame Longbottom there was no denying he was an unrepentant dandy! He certainly had the roguish good looks to go with his fashion sense Dumbledore thought with frank admiration.

"Ah Reginald, you are here at last! Come sit!" Dumbledore snapped his fingers and an elf appeared with a fresh pot of tea. "Lemon drop?" Dumbledore offered the man as he sat.

Reginald wave his hand in negation, "No Albus, thank you. I have news. I'm not sure if it is good or not but by my oath I don't think you will like it."

Dumbledore was careful not to let the sigh he could not escape be loud enough to be heard by the other wizard. As he got older he found it harder and harder to keep up the image of the infallible sage of a wizard which was expected of him. "Good news or bad, what has happened? Did Draco Malfoy become Lord Black in full as we expected?"

Reginald shook his head, "Not at all, Headmaster. His claim was denied when Harry Potter challenged him for the House by right of blood!"

Dumbledore's shaggy eyebrows rose in surprise. "Dear me! I assume the goblins quickly administered a blood inheritance test?" Dumbledore knew the goblins took every opportunity to do so. With so many dirty secrets hidden among the forest of supposed pure

family trees of magical Britain, the goblins quickly took every chance to reactivate Houses gone dark or extinct. It didn't happen very often but no goblin ever passed up even the slightest chance of having more gold to work with.

Reginald Fenwick nodded, "Aye they did. Albus the test showed that not only was Potter descended from Isla Black on his mother's side but he had the blood of Cadmus Peverell through it as well. Coupled with the line of Ignotus from his father's line, he was confirmed as Lord Peverell as well!"

Dumbledore blinked in surprise. As a hunter of the Deathly Hallows from his youth and possessor of the Elder Wand, this news stunned him. No less so because he knew Harry's cloak was indeed the third Deathly Hallow. Perhaps this new development might lead to the lost Resurrection Stone and Dumbledore could finally complete his personal quest to unite all three Hallows!

However exciting this news was, something Reginald said broke through his glee. "Confirmed you say? How is this possible Reginald? I thought the acts I had Minister Fudge put forth under the guise of 'state secrets' would keep Harry from inheriting his title till he was seventeen."

The omens and Arithmancy calculations that Dumbledore had done and redone over the years seem to point to an almost certain final confrontation between Harry Potter and Voldemort before Harry's seventeen birthday. Keeping him from his title thus would hide much of the skulduggery that had been done to break House Potter. The general public would not care that the galleons 'stolen' from House Potter had been used to keep them safe. No, Dumbledore thought, they would cry for justice even though the action had kept them from being oppressed serfs to the Dark Lord. He wouldn't admit it but Dumbledore himself had often felt as Harry did when he raged about wanting to leave Britain to Voldemort. Sadly this was never an option for the Leader of the Light.

Reginald shook his head and gave a rueful chuckle, "Oh it is possible alright. Right before our eyes Harry Potter was confirmed Lord Black which emancipated him. Then Director Ragnok granted him his titles over House Potter and Peverell. I thought old Derrick Flint was going to have a stroke at the sight. Lady Malfoy was the only one that brought up a decent challenge to it all."

This piece of information didn't surprise Dumbledore in the least. It was well that Voldemort leaned more on Bellatrix than Narcissa. There was a woman to rival the abilities of Minerva McGonagall that much was a certainty!

Fenwick took a drink of tea before continuing, "However we all were undone by the goblins. Everything that happened today fell under treaty so Ragnok was within his rights to emancipate the boy. Once that was done, there wasn't anything to stop him from taking on House Potter, state secrets be damned. That whelp Percy Weasley tried to stop it but almost started off another goblin rebellion before he got a clue and shut his yap. Even after that he almost got himself a right beating. Of course Lucius' brat said some things that I can't believe the goblins let slide. Even his own mother acted as if he had the 'pox at times!"

Dumbledore stroked his beard. Pomona often joked that the only reason men grew them was to have something to play with in public since they couldn't stroke their dicks. Dumbledore often despaired in Sprout's depressingly pedestrian attempts at humor. His Herbology teacher's crude earthy humor aside, stroking his beard did help him think for some reason.

So Harry was now an emancipated lord of not only his own house but that of Black and Peverell; a house thought to be extinct for generations! Because of this Dumbledore knew he now had very little in the ways to prevent the boy from making good his threats to leave England and go to school in France.

Dumbledore looked up at Fenwick who had politely been giving the old man time to process all the news. Seeing he had the Headmaster's attention again he went on, "Besides gaining title to three Houses, another surprising development arose. The curse of Godric has stuck again. Since Potter is now Lord Black, the curse worked through the link and broke Lady Malfoy's marriage. She is Narcissa Black again. It is possible the same curse may have acted on Bellatrix's marriage as well."

Dumbledore nodded, "An interesting development but not a surprising one considering the power of the curse has shown over the generations. I'm frankly amazed House Malfoy has managed to keep it covered up as well as they have. It is a good development for

us at least. Narcissa Malfoy was always the driving force behind Lucius' plans and only his arrogance kept him from realizing he was a tool of his wife's ambitions. She will be a treasure trove of information we need to mine before the Death Eaters try to kill her. I'm sure Voldemort has already ordered her death."

Dumbledore hoped he could get the ex-Malfoy to Hogwarts so he could invade her mind and find out all that she knew. He'd then turn her over to Severus to ensure he hadn't missed anything. He knew after Severus was done with her she would no longer be a threat. He could then use her, even as a brain-damaged tool, as bait for an ambush. Even with Sirius Black's death, the ambush at the Department of Mysteries had been a success for the Order.

If he could continue to strike at Voldemort's Death Eaters, Dumbledore was sure Voldemort would be forced to do something grand and daring and thus trigger the confrontation that would end things once and for all. In the wake of the news of Voldemort's rebirth and final defeat, Dumbledore was confident he could 'tidy' things up and cover his dirty tracks regarding the whole mess.

"Where is Harry now? I expected Nymphadora to have him back by now." Dumbledore asked.

Reginald gave a laugh. "She tried. I was hanging around the bank and overheard her try and fail. The new Lord Potter shut her down and did it quite impressively I might add. If he was a cranky teen like you said earlier in the month then his time in the tower sure mellowed him. Of course he had Narcissa with him and they had talked for awhile after the meeting. She might have been giving him pointers considering her fate is now dependent on him as Lord Black."

Reginald's face broke into a frown before he continued. "Funny how he was being addressed as Lord Black instead of Lord Potter as you would expect. I heard three different goblins call him that as well as Tonks. Anyway, after they left the bank, Narcissa chewed on the reporters waiting for them before they took off ostentatiously to go shopping. From the choices I heard Potter give Tonks earlier, she's sticking with him to keep an eye on him since Narcissa could apparate them to parts unknown if she left them to come back to report."

Reginald leaned forward, "I did overhear, purely by coincidence of course, that the goblins will be meeting the new Lord Black later today at Grimmauld Place to have a new Fidelius charm put on the place. I also heard Potter tell Tonks he might stay there tonight before returning to Hogwarts. How much of that is true and how much the boy is just blowing smoke up her robe I'm not sure."

Again Dumbledore found himself lost in thought. Finally he looked up, "Thank you Reginald. You have done me and the Order a valuable service today and I shan't forget it. If you will forgive me, however, I have a lot to think on. I have to get a team together to meet Potter at Grimmauld Place. I'd rather not have you there since I doubt Harry realizes you are in the Order."

Fenwick stood with and shrugged. "I understand Albus. I have business to attend to. With today's events there are business opportunities to take advantage of. I know many Houses had made business moves on the assumption Draco Malfoy would become the new Lord Black. Those Houses are going to be a bit poorer by week's end if I have any say in it!"

With a cheery wave the brightly clothed wizard disappeared into the floor. Almost at once the cat Fenwick had not noticed curled up behind the many silvery devices in the Headmaster's office leapt to the floor and transformed back into the Deputy Headmistress. Over the years the pair had found that people gave more information to Dumbledore alone than to them both together. Minerva's animagus form got around this problem quite easily. Plus Dumbledore suspected that, while she would never admit it, doing so also gave her an excuse to nap.

Her face was thoughtful. "A surprising turn of events, Albus. Very surprising indeed."

Dumbledore nodded in agreement, "Yes and now we need to determine how much this affects our plans. I must say I do hope that the boy wasn't lying to Nymphadora about returning to Hogwarts. I hope our plan to let the boy cool off and think has worked. Leaving Britain simply isn't an option for him."

Minerva sat and poured herself a cup of tea. "I agree but I think the Supreme Mugwump should make some quick calls to confirm none of the other countries of the ECMS will allow him entry. I am still

worried that the Delacour's feelings about the boy might affect how the French Ministry acts. Sadly they might grant Potter access simply to spite us. If anything I think relations between magical Britain and France are more contentious than between the two Muggle governments."

"Yes that would be the prudent course of action. Minerva I believe we need to take a page from your previously successful plans to nip this problem in the bud. If Harry indeed plans to return to Hogwarts I think he has calmed down enough for us to lean on him a bit. I think a combination of you, the Weasley and friends such as Ms. Granger could be used in tandem to slowly reel him back into the fold."

McGonagall gave a wintery smile, "Yes, I'm sure I can easily act the stern, but disappointed grandmother who is, however, forced by affection to extend a hand of reconciliation. In light of how angry I was the first night of term, I would think Harry would be happy to accept that. I must say it won't be difficult to do this. I'm still rather livid at his actions but none of those feelings matter in the face of the Greater Good."

The old witch stirred some treacle into her tea, "Plus I agree that between the typical mother's guilt Molly serves up so well will balance nicely with Potter seeing his friends again. Our thwarting of all of Ms. Granger's attempts to see him will soften the blow of her absence and will again make her seem less of our agent. I'm sure after giving him one of those bone-crushing hugs of hers, the first words out of her mouth will be the injustice of what happened to him and how cruel the two of us have been for keeping her from him."

"Yes, for all her brilliance, Ms. Granger is nothing but predictable. I'm sure that she tried to contact him but was prevented by us will also work to our advantage. We both know how Harry tries to protect his friends. In fact, I would wager that is very reason he has decided to return to Hogwarts." Dumbledore agreed.

Minerva gave a thoughtful frown, "I am concerned about Ronald Weasley. He has always been a poor pawn and even with his mother's efforts as well as the promise of galleons for his part in all this I fear his usefulness may be at an end. I worry that the effects the Cognivores had on him make him even more irritable and unpredictable. While Harry continuing his education here at Hogwarts makes everything simpler it will almost certainly mean he

will return to be the starting Seeker on the Gryffindor's House team if nothing else to continue his clandestine relationship with Ms. Bell. While I know Ms. Weasley prefers to be a Chaser and thus won't mind giving up her slot to Mr. Potter, I doubt her brother will take it as well."

Dumbledore nodded sadly, "Mr. Weasley never has been one to deal with his jealousy easily. Having Harry back on the team will overshadow his modest gains in notoriety as Keeper. Yes I can see the problem. Before the events at the start of term we could simply take him out of the picture somehow but now this would drive another wedge between us and Harry we cannot afford. I wish now that we had confined him to St. Mungo's till all of this was resolved. However his use as a possible restraint on Harry couldn't be ignored."

Minerva had face seem to be carved of stone and her voice was cold. "I think after we see how tonight goes, I shall have a chat with Molly. If she cannot control her son then he will have to be dealt with. We are almost so close to the final confrontation we cannot let her son run riot over our plans. If she is unable to control her son then I will take care of the situation myself."

Dumbledore didn't like the sound in his Deputy's voice, "Now Minerva I doubt it will be that bad. I'm sure you will not have to do anything too drastic to resolve the situation."

"Drastic? Albus, if Mr. Weasley takes one misstep off the role he is to play then he will be dead before the day is done. We are too close to finally putting an end to all of this!"

"Now Minerva..." Dumbledore attempted to say.

"Now Minerva, nothing!" McGonagall spat as she stood. She leaned forward and Dumbledore had no problem reading the resolve in her eyes. "My House is dead because of Voldemort! How many other Houses fell? What of House Lovegood and Potter? Is the life of one of six boys out of the entire Weasley clan not worth peace? How has House Weasley suffered as the rest of us suffered?"

Dumbledore tried to interrupt, "Minerva, please..."

The redoubtable witch carried on as if she didn't hear him, "How have they suffered Albus? Yes Molly would cry that her family suffered but their loss was a boon frankly. To finally be rid of their line of bullies and thugs masquerading as heroes of the Light was a blessing! Tell me Albus, how many Weasley's died in the War? None I tell you! Britain is practically overrun with the gingers of their clan! If it wasn't for their poverty Hogwarts would be filled with Weasleys!"

Minerva's voice rose as her Scots anger came to the fore. "It sickens me that Molly thinks she is entitled to even one Knut for her services considering her children were the first Weasleys besides Arthur in years to go to Hogwarts! And how was Hogwarts repaid for our generosity? You and I know full well the depths Molly's children sank to while they were here! Worse that all of them where in my House, disgracing the proud name of Godric Gryffindor! Neoptolemus broke his House financially to fight for the Light! You sent the Potters and Longbottoms to their fates for the Light. My family DIED for the Light! If one Weasley has to be sacrificed so we can end this then so be it!"

The portraits of all the ex-Headmasters could be heard whispering in shocked conversation in the silence that followed as McGonagall glared at Dumbledore, daring him to contradict her. Dumbledore's shoulder's sagged in defeat. He knew she was right; he simply hadn't wanted any more blood on his hands. They were already stained with the blood of friends and loyal followers. Would James and Lily Potter forgive him for their deaths in the name of the Greater Good? Dumbledore pray every night that it would so even if he knew he would never forgive himself. Ever since his sister's death it seemed Dumbledore rarely could save those he wished. It was why he could never run away from it all. He owed it to Ariana's memory but at times like this the burden was so very heavy.

Dumbledore gave a long, suffering sigh. "Very well Minerva, I shall leave this in your capable hands. You know of my wishes. Gather up who you feel will best help us bring Harry back under control. You will have to apparate into the park across from Grimmauld Place since the floo network connection will have been severed with Harry becoming the new Lord Black. I will see if I can get Fudge to hurry the reconnection process along. Sadly this is our only option since I can't even ask Phinias whether or not Harry has been there yet since all it would take is a word from him as Lord Black and he

couldn't tell us anything. I doubt Narcissa would fail to mention this to him."

"To right you are!" The portrait of the seedy looking Headmaster agreed angrily. "As if I would betray the Ancient and Noble House of Black! Why the very idea is ludicrous!"

Minerva had visibly calmed down. Dumbledore felt that the Deputy Headmistress hated herself when she lost control like that. As wrenching as it was for him when she did it, Dumbledore wished she would do it more often if only to release some of the anguish he knew she kept bottled tight inside her. If it hadn't been for the prophecy, Dumbledore would not bet against Minerva in a duel against Voldemort regardless of how long those odds might be.

"I shall handle it Albus. In truth this is probably one of the easier tasks we have had in a long while. As long as we can quickly separate him from Narcissa Black I am confident we can get our plans back on track. Seeing Ms. Granger again will do a lot to further this I'm sure." McGonagall said confidently.

Dumbledore nodded sagely, trying to gain back the feeling he was fully in charge and things were under his control as they had been for years. "As I said, Minerva, I leave it to you to deal with as you see fit. Even in defeat as with the Fund, you have never truly failed me. I am sure by tomorrow we will have Harry back in his room in Gryffindor Tower and we can get back to working toward the final confrontation to end this once and for all."

McGonagall gave a curt nod and strode purposefully out of his office. After she left, Dumbledore's whole body sagged in his chair. He really felt his age on days like this. He needed a pick-me-up since while he doubted he would need to make an appearance tonight to win over Harry, it was always possible. He needed to be clear headed and alert.

Dumbledore glanced at the class schedule hanging on the wall over where Fawkes snoozed on his perch, oblivious to everything that had happened. Dumbledore smiled broadly when the chart affirmed who was teaching and who had an open period. There was plenty of time before the next class. More than enough time for what he needed.

Dumbledore opened a drawer in his desk and with a tap of his wand a secret compartment opened. From it he took a slender phial and stashed it in his robes. Dumbledore rose as he whistled a ditty from a Muggle candy commercial to himself. This reminded him he would have to have an elf replenish his stock; he was getting low on M&M's.

Dumbledore straighten his robes a bit and adjusted the taqqiyah on his head. It was a prized gift from his friend Hasan al Gardez who had often worked with him on many Arithmancy equations over the years. Dumbledore had spent too much time among the Muggles not to think of a dunce's cap when seeing the traditional pointy hat on more conservative wizard's heads.

Satisfied with his primping, Dumbledore opened a passageway known to very few outside ex-Headmasters. Continuing to whistle to himself, he strolled down into the bowels of Hogwarts. There was so much to do and very little time to get it all done. However as the Leader of the Light wasn't he entitled to an afternoon of fornication now and then?

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A/N: Yes, I know...I'm a bastard because you still don't know what happened to Lilith! =0 however it takes a while to read all of this out loud while editing it. It took me a long time and cut into other more important things I should have been doing. So as much as I was going to add an additional scene, it will have to wait for Chapter 8. Sorry Honks fans, you've been denied again!

Updates: While I haven't added anything earth-shattering, I have updated every chapter. Some like chapter two and five have had some decent amount of material added in the sense that certain scenes are a bit longer. This story is a work in progress and in the interest of posting quickly I am forced to update quite often to correct errors. I have reposted Chapter Six four times already. So every so often you might want to go back and reread the story from the beginning. It also is another reason why I appreciate detailed reviews; I have already made changes due to comments and questions.

Reviews: I can't stop you from doing it, but if you wish to leave a review please stop yourself if all you are going to leave is "good job"

or "love it!" or something short like that. I do appreciate the sentiment but I get alerts whenever someone tags my story as a favorite or me as a favorite author. So my ego is covered. What I would like from you if you are inclined to review is what is it you liked? Was something unclear? Did something bother you even though you liked the story? Was something not clear or add up? I need those comments since while I have an ending all planned out; many of the paths getting there are unwritten. I've already made changes due to reviews because there was stuff I thought was clear that turned out to be (ahem) clearly not clear. Just telling me a story is great doesn't tell me what I'm doing right. That people like my story is evident in the amount of people who have tagged the story.

Keep Writing! Also, no need to beg me to continue writing; I want to get to the end of this story just as much as you do. I can't wait to see how it finally plays out. Besides, since one of my all time pet peeves of fan-fiction is posting a story and not finishing it. If an author cared about their readers they'd either finish it or have the decency to pull it so people (like me) won't get sucked into a 30+ chapter only to find it unfinished with the last update back in 2005 or so. Nope, by posting this I've made a pact with you all to complete this and that's what I intend to do.

Hoover up the rug: In England, the Hoover brand vacuum spawned the verb 'hoovering' as an alternative for vacuuming. I love the term and use it myself.

Taqqiyah: The closest thing I could find to the fez-like hat you see with the Michael Gambon's version of Dumbledore wear. Pointy wizard caps and 'traditional' witch's hats all have one thing in common: they make the wearer look dorky. Dame Maggie Smith sort of pulls it off but I think we can all see why except for the early films, the directors moved away from all the 'traditional' robes and hats to something more close to what modern British students wear. The 'wizard's' robes actually fit in with the classic robe/cloaks worn by European students going back centuries. The name of the wizard I have giving it to Dumbledore is a shout out to Colonel Hasan who was the chief intelligence officer for the 203rd Afghan National Army Corps based out of Gardez in the Paktya province where I spent most of my time while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (I was there before Afghanistan was 'cool' if you can call it that while helping to train their army) He is (hopefully still is) an amazing man whose political ambitions were stymied due to the fact

he comes from the Hazara ethnic group widely believed to be descendent from the Mongols. To put it mildly, the Mongols were not polite guests when they visited Afghanistan back in the day. Thus even centuries later their decedents are disliked. I tell you, no one can hold a grudge like an Afghan can!

CHAPTER EIGHT – GRIM TIDINGS

CAMDEN TOWN, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – EVENING

Marcus Flint was excited but nervous at the same time. Tonight was probably one of the most important night of his young life. It wasn't enough that he had stalked a Squib, raped her, killed her and displayed the defaced corpse to spread terror and thus earned his Dark Mark. Now he had to prove worthy of being considered a true Death Eater. Isaac Avery had been very clear in his orders before sending them out. This could be an easy mission to bushwhack members of the Order of the Phoenix as the apparated in or it could go south quickly if Dumbledore showed up. Avery had stressed the very real possibility both possibilities could happen.

Avery had also been blunt about the fact that while the Dark Lord had high hopes about the mission's success he wasn't about to send his best people. So the team would be headed by the arch-traitor Pettigrew along with those Death Eaters new to the Mark. Before they had left Avery told them they needed to succeed and to prove themselves worthy but also not to be stupid and over-confident. After the fiasco at the Department of Mysteries, the Death Eaters could not afford to spend the lives of their members carelessly.

Flint grunted softly to himself at how surprised the new recruits had been when Pettigrew of all people gave a decent pep talk prior to them apparating close to where they knew Grimmauld Place was. As a one-time captain of the Slytherin House Quidditch team, Flint had made many such speeches so he knew a good one when he heard it.

Pettigrew had told them how they should not lose heart that Avery had practically called them disposable. He told them how the Dark Lord rewarded loyalty and results. Had he not been one of the lowest of the Death Eaters, one looked down upon by the others? Yet had it not been he who gave the Dark Lord the Potters? Had he not been the one loyal enough to seek him out and give up his own hand to give the Dark Lord his new body? Pettigrew had fired them up by telling them that when their mask went on, their titles, wealth and bloodlines all meant nothing. Only the results were what matter to the Dark Lord.

This had hit Marcus Flint especially hard since results were something he had failed at again and again. He had been the Quidditch captain who allowed Gryffindor to take away the Cup for the first time in over a decade. Then he had flunked his NEWTs thinking that he could bribe his way into passing. His family was furious with him and had told him that any more failures by him would get him thrown out of the family. Unlike many Pureblood families, Marcus had a younger brother who was more than willing to become the Flint heir.

Successfully gaining the Dark Mark was only the first part of regaining his honor in the eyes of his family. He had to shine and now was the time with Draco beaten twice now by Potter and Lucius in Azkaban after his failure. Thus now was the time for House Flint to rise up and take what should rightfully be theirs!

Flint's grandiose dreams were interrupted when a teenage girl came around the corner. She was happily skipping and laughing, calling back for her companions to keep up with her. Flint squinted; it was hard to see with so much of the street either in the light of the streetlamps or in what seemed to be utter darkness. One of his companions had earlier remarked how the Black House seemed to suck out the light around the neighborhood even under the Fidelius charm.

Earlier, when they had apparated in, they found no trace of Grimmauld Place. Pettigrew had merely shrugged and said the Dark Lord had felt it was probable a new Fidelius charm would be cast before they got there. It was enough they knew it was in the area and so he moved them into concealed positions to cover the likely places wizards would use to apparate in unnoticed. Pettigrew had obviously guessed right as Flint got a closer look at the teenager.

Flint recognized the girl just as saw that Potter and the pink-haired auror they had been briefed about trailing behind her. She was a mudblood from Hufflepuff in the same year as Potter. From the looks on her face and that of Potter it looked like they had just finished up a date. This was too perfect. Suddenly all the careful briefings and plans that Pettigrew had drilled into them were forgotten as Flint was consumed with the desire to finally get revenge on Potter for making him look like a fool before Slytherin House.

Flint was moving without conscious thought; he broke cover and he raised his wand. The killing curse needed to be driven by hate and his hatred of Potter would be enough. Potter would suffer before he died as he watched his date fall in the first move towards greatness by House Flint!

"Avada Kedavra!"

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What a fucking moron! Harry thought as he pulled Lilith towards him with his wandless magic. She fell into a heap at his feet with a startled shout as he started casting spells. His first one was a mere stunner but it was a quick spell and one he had practiced tirelessly and taught so often with the D.A. that it easily leapt from his wand with barely a murmur. The stunner nailed the Death Eater who had cast the killing curse dead center in the chest which caused him to spin into some trash bins.

Beside him Tonks swore as a nasty spell barely missed her as she moved to back Harry up. Spells started to rain down from the darkness of the small walk-about park across the street. Harry could hear pops of apparition coming from the darkness. Harry realized that the Death Eaters must have been widely covering the area since with the new Fidelius charm they couldn't quite know where Grimmauld Place was. Now the Death Eaters were congregating their numbers which was very bad news.

Harry knew he needed a distraction so he could create some cover so he cast an Aquamenti spell and really pushed his magic behind it to create a vast stream of water like that from a fireman's hose. He heard a few surprised cries as he quickly hosed down the area before he unleashed his real attack. He knelt and with a quick stab touched his wand to the trail of water he had created that led to his attackers, "Fulmen Illisus!"

Blue-white lighting crackled and electricity spread through the water. The earlier surprised cries turned to shouts of pain. Harry had known he wouldn't be able to do much damage with this spell under these conditions but he was sure it bought him some precious seconds.

Sprawled at his feet, Lilith gasped as she saw Harry's eyes roll back as he made a gesture with his left hand and a Mini across the street shuddered and suddenly flipped onto its side. It skidded across the pavement to stop in front of Harry.

"Bloody Hell!" Tonks yelled. She was obviously as gobsmacked as Lilith was. Lilith held her wand tightly and rolled into a crouch. She needed to help!

"Stop!" Lilith was shocked to see Harry looking at her with a cold look with blood oozing out from his nose. "Stay here and stay hidden! Let Tonks and I deal with this! Do this for me!"

Harry then seemed to be a blur of motion as he sprinted up the street to take cover behind another car which was rapidly hit with various curses. The car's lights began to blink and the car alarm triggered by the impact of the spells began to go off.

Harry paused behind the car as its horn blared. The noise reminded him that he was either up against some stupid Death Eaters or green ones...or both. Harry hadn't learned silent casting of spells since he hadn't been to any classes this term and he hadn't had a wand earlier to practice what he now had from Voldemort's mind. Last year he had stressed to the D.A. that it was often best to use spells you could say or cast quickly rather than use stronger spells that took more time to cast. There wasn't a shield spell that could defeat the killing curse but it couldn't be cast silently and it took a bit of time to say. Harry's wandless magic had been starting to pull Lilith out of the way before who ever had cast the curse had even gotten to the second word.

That he could hear, even over the car horn blaring, spoken spells coming from the darkness of the park made him wonder if he was being attacked by a bunch of fifth years! Considering how bad the DADA teachers had been over the years it just made sense that even the bad guys had poor skills.

Harry started to fire a quick succession of spells into the darkness. While he knew some right evil ones from Voldemort's memories, he needed time to figure out how many opponents he was facing. Plus he wanted to keep them oriented on him and away from Tonks and Lilith.

A spell powerful enough to break all the safety glass in the vehicle he was hiding behind reminded Harry that this wasn't some D.A. lesson back in the Room of Requirements but real life. It was time to use some "Voldemort" specials after all. Harry reminded himself he would have to thank Voldemort for him inadvertently giving him an 'upgrade' as it were. Harry kept his head down till the glass stopped falling and then rolled around to the front of the car and cried, "Malicus Angor!" towards where he thought he heard a spell came from

Harry thought he heard a rattling gasp but it was hard to tell with the car alarm going off. It was, the least of his worries as he saw Tonks get clipped by some spell and go down behind the Mini he had thrown up as an impromptu shield. He saw Lilith quickly move to help the pink-haired witch who seemed to be having convulsions.

Thinking some truly vile oaths, Harry ran through his options and didn't like what he had to work with. Taking a deep breath he centered himself and with a great shout his magic took hold of the car in front of him.

Harry felt as if his head would burst as he threw the car towards the darkness. Even by channeling the magic through his wand made Harry's head ring like a clarion bell. He couldn't let up though and as the car crashed into the bushes it flipped over exposing the bottom. Harry fought through the pain. He pointed his wand at what he hoped was the fuel tank, "Igneus Obex"

A fiery bolt of energy shot toward the car, piercing what was indeed the fuel tank. Sadly, unlike in Hollywood, the car didn't explode but the ruptured tank did scatter the burning fuel around. A shriek which abruptly cut off seemed to show that at least one of Harry's opponents might have been crushed under the car as it flipped one more time before sliding to a halt against a tree.

Harry stumbled across the street towards his attackers, blood starting to seep from his ears due to the strain. While his magical core still sang with plenty of energy his body just wasn't able to channel it. Harry knew it had to ramp back the spells or he'd kill himself before any of the Death Eaters could manage it.

Thinking of how Sirius had told him of how James said a messy battlefield made for opportunities Harry realized that water from his

earlier spell was still there. With a series of spiky movements he cast, "Conus Gelum!"

Harry gave a wry grin as he panted while leaning against the fence surrounding the park. Hopefully some of his opponents would slip and bust ass on the ice he just created. Harry noticed his first opponent was a few feet away so he sent another stunner at him. He figured Narcissa might enjoy interrogating the Death Eater for him. His grin was wiped away as a cutting curse sliced through his upper left arm. Harry swore and ducked behind some trash bins.

His attention was brought back to the street as he heard Lilith scream. He saw that someone had conjured a pair of wolves along with a flock of bats that were converging around the car. With a sigh Harry once again wondered with all the magic being used that no one from the Ministry had shown up yet. It was the Department of Mysteries all over again! He cast a quick charm he learned from Madam Pomfrey to stem the flow of blood from his arm before centering his wand on the center of the bat swarm.

"Sagita Cataegis!" A quiver-full of arrows shot from Harry's wand which took care of the bats. For once luck seemed to be on Harry's side because the wolves were distracted by the appearance of a much easier meal than the Hufflepuff shooting stunners at them.

Harry's good luck quickly ended as the cast iron fence railing suddenly came alive and wrapped around him; it quickly began to crush him. Harry quickly countered with a wandless pulse that seemed to emanate from within him, pushing away in all directions. He quickly dropped and rolled away as the spell he knew would follow cast a shower of sparks as it hit the railing.

Screw this, Harry thought and he leapt to his feet and covered his eyes with his left arm. He pointed his wand skyward and shouted, "Deus Lux!" A brilliant flash of light erupted about 10 meters over the park. It was as if an artillery flare had gone off and night became as day.

Harry dodged to the right and then to the right again. He hoped his opponents would be blinded but the fact was he knew he now easily seen under the bright light. He cast a quick cone of silence spell on himself before following up with, "Tonitrus Frigor!" A thunderous explosion of sound rocked the area causing windows for two blocks to shatter.

Harry was happy with his magical equivalent of a 'flash-bang' grenade. Whoever said that watching the telly rots your brain never had to fight in a magical duel! For just a second Harry had the silly thought of imagining what the Obliviation squad was going to come up with to explain all of this! This funny thought was quickly dashed as Harry could see that he was up against about four or five Death Eaters in the park. While most seemed affected by one or the other of his spells, almost all of them seem to be looking right at him.

Yet it was an orange utility sign beside one of the Death Eater's that caught Harry's attention. His idle thought about the Oblivators fresh in his mind made him realize what he had to do. He sprinted back towards the over-turned Mini. His luck held as the blinded or addled Death Eater's curses failed to hit their mark as his flare spell dimmed causing darkness to fall again as he ran.

Harry leaped over one of the wolves which seemed to be stunned and steadied himself against the Mini. He quickly glanced down at the two 'Puffs to find that Lilith had taken out the other wolf. Lilith was still blinking the spots out of her eyes and holding her ears. Tonks still looked in a bad way. She was still convulsing and was bleeding out from a nasty gash in her right side.

"Get down!" Harry commanded and then pushed Lilith down when he realized she might not have heard him. He turned back towards the park and cautiously leaned out from behind the Mini. The brilliant green ray of the death curse barely missed his face as he knelt and took aim at the ground by the sign, "Bombarda!"

Harry threw himself back behind the Mini and rolled reached out to grab Lilith and hold her down against him. Harry thought he heard something that sounded like a cry to flee when the air was again rent with a huge explosion and a flash of light and flame. Harry almost passed out in pain as he threw everything he had to keep the Mini upright as the blast erupted out of the park and hit it full on.

His magic held but it was a near thing since the pavement around them buckled and the Mini sagged as a tree cut down by the explosion fell down onto it. One of the branches missed impaling Tonks by mere half meter. Feeling like his lungs were filled with broken glass and his skin was being eaten by fire ants; Harry heaved himself out from under the tree. He drunkenly staggered

around the mangled Mini but his wand was steady in his hand as he covered what was left of the park.

Just as he had planned, his spell had ruptured a natural gas line. The "Call Before You Dig!" sign that had caught his attention was probably embedded in one of the surrounding flats Harry thought. That and all the pieces of the Death Eaters that weren't with the few torn corpses he could see. The gas line continued to spew a column of fiery gas like a blow torch but there didn't seem to be any danger of another explosion. Harry's breath seemed to catch in his throat as he realized he had once again escaped what most would consider a certain death situation.

Harry groggily walked over to where he had stunned the first Death Eater. He thought the retaining wall should have protected the fallen wizard from the blast. He hoped so because he needed information.

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Peter hated Harry Potter. He hated him with every fiber of his being. It was bad enough that he looked so much like James Potter but why did he have to check Peter at every turn? Why was it the one person he had to kill was the one he owed a life debt to?

It didn't matter because Peter could not fail. He didn't know how many of his team apparated out before the blast. He himself barely had enough time to transform into a rat and drop to safety behind the retaining wall. While the blast did not kill him, Peter knew that if he didn't at least kill Potter, his life would be forfeit for the failure. The Dark Lord might excuse a good showing against Dumbledore and the Order but to lose most of his team to a rookie auror, a mudblood and just Potter himself? It wouldn't matter that it was that idiot boy Flint who jumped the gun and ruined his carefully planned trap! No, if Pettigrew wanted to continue living then Harry Potter had to die.

Pettigrew transformed back to his human form which still felt alien to him after all those years he spent as a rat. He could not strike at Harry directly for the life debt would act in a similar way to someone attacking the Head of their House. He tried to remember the spell which would create a toxic gas. It was a charm that Sirius had gotten out of some of the nastier Black magical tomes. He had modified it

to make the gas merely stink instead of causing an agonizing death not unlike Muggle mustard gas. Slytherin House was often in need of a good airing out when the Marauders were at Hogwarts! However Peter had never been good with charms so he struggled to remember the original spell. As he did, Peter suddenly realized Harry had come around the corner and was staring at him.

Harry looked at the man who betrayed his parents with something that could only be described as ambivalence. The strain of pushing so much magic through a body not ready for the flow had left him magically charged but physically drained. He almost felt as if his skin was simply a set of Dudley's too-big cast offs. For some reason the fact that Pettigrew's wand was pointed directly at him didn't seem to reach him.

Yet as the two stared at each other, sounds began to fill Harry up. There were the cries of Lilith for Tonks to wake up. There were the screams of people who had been rudely shaken out of their evening in front of the telly or game of Resident Evil on their Playstation. How many had just been enjoying the night with a favorite book? Now their peace was shattered by an evil from a world they knew nothing about. An evil that would kill them all if left unchecked.

This thought seemed cut through the fog of fatigue that gripped Harry and ignited a reservoir of rage. It was Pettigrew who had betrayed his parents. It was because of Pettigrew's betrayal that Sirius had went after the Rat which got him sent to Azkaban instead of raising Harry as his own. It was Pettigrew who had brought Voldemort back from just being a dangerous shade.

Peter's face went slack with fear at how Harry's face had gone from an expressionless mask to one of pure hatred and murderous intent. It was a look the likes Pettigrew had only seen on the face of the Dark Lord himself. The danger of attacking Harry forgotten, Peter started to stutter out a curse.

Harry's wand didn't budge as his opponent tried to get a spell out through his fearful stuttering. Where before Harry skin had felt loose on him, now it seem stretched taunt over his bones and on fire. Harry's vision seemed to fail as the color shifted into an odd spectrum as he saw Peter first spell fail. With a desperate oath Pettigrew tried to curse him again. All Harry felt was an all consuming hatred and desire to kill the traitor well up in him.

Harry heard an odd noise, like a howl before he fell into darkness.

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As Lilith struggled to try and figure a way to help Auror Tonks she had only one thought which was she was fucking tired of life's twists! She cursed Fate as she finally managed to stem the blood flow to the wound on Tonk's side. Her ears had finally stopped ringing which was a blessing. She had worried she was going to be blind and deaf for life after those two spells had gone off! Of course with everything going on, she almost wished still couldn't hear because Tonk's desperate and painful moans made her sick.

Suddenly over all the alarms and screams Lilith heard an unearthly howl followed by the most terrifying shriek of terror she had ever heard. The shocked screams when people had seen the manifestations of their friends worst fears when Professor Lupin had them go against a boggart were like murmurs of slight surprise in comparison! The primal fear in it seemed to touch something deep in Lilith's brain and for a moment she was struck fast as if remaining motionless would keep her from being seen by a nearby predator. Every instinct screamed at her to avoid being noticed!

The shriek quickly turned to screams of pain and a sound that she couldn't identify but it sounded primal and vicious. Very quickly the screams of terror and pain cut off in a sickening rattle that Lilith could not help but know involved lots and lots of blood, and mangled flesh.

Ignoring the fear in her heart she got to her feet and quickly jumped around the Mini and dodged once or twice just in case their were still Death Eaters about. No matter how evil and horrible the sounds were, Harry was out there and she had to see if she could help him. A movement caught her eye and she turned towards it and came face to face with Death.

It came around the ruins of the retaining wall with its iron fencing bent by the earlier explosion and stood silhouetted in the fountain of flames coming from the gas line Harry had ruptured earlier. Lilith, while a Muggleborn, still felt the blood in her veins turn to ice as she stared at something Professor Trelawney had often warned of. It

looked at her with eyes which confirmed the primal fear awoken by the earlier screams.

It was a Grim. It was larger than any dog she had ever seen and its muzzle was covered with blood. Its fur was the color of obsidian and it seemed to radiate magic and menace. Like its muzzle, the front paws were sticky with blood and Lilith knew in a flash what had caused the shriek of terror and screams of pain that had so terrified her. Death had come personally to collect from one of the Death Eaters. Looking into the Grim's brilliant green eyes it was as if she was staring down the death curse again with Death's inevitability coming at her.

Then it struck her. The Grim's eyes were the color of the death curse...just like Harry's eyes. She gasped at this thought. Could it be? She lowered her wand and called out, "Harry?"

The Grim blinked at her and suddenly its whole demeanor seemed to change. Where once had been an omen of certain death now seemed to be just one really big dog. However a shout from behind caused the dog to bristle and turn with a growl.

Lilith could see Narcissa Black hurrying towards her with her wand out. She skidded to a shocked stop with a look on her face which Lilith was sure had just been on her own upon seeing the Grim. "Miss Black wait! It's not a Grim! I think...I think it's Harry!"

The dog seemed to falter again at hearing Harry's name. Lilith took a chance and carefully walked closer, "Harry! It's me, Lilith and I want to help you. It is you in there, right? Harry you need to come back because the aurors will be here soon! Plus Tonks needs you."

The dog sat down on its haunches, still looking between Narcissa and Lilith. She steeled herself and then reached down to take the dog's bloody head between her hands and looked deep into the emerald green eyes. "Come back Harry, it's over and you need to come back."

With a shudder the dog's form rippled and then it was Harry again. He sagged against Lilith who cradled his head in her arms. Narcissa gave a shocked gasp and came running up. Lilith waved her off, "Miss Black hold up! Tonks is hurt really badly and I couldn't do much for her. I don't think Harry is hurt, just tired!"

Narcissa looked down at Harry and then over at Tonks before looking around. Lilith realized that Narcissa was just now really seeing all the destruction around them. Between the fires, destroyed cars, mangled corpses as well as the crowd of neighbors beginning to spill out of their homes looking for answers it made for quite a scene. Lilith could already hear the wail of approaching sirens.

Lilith looked back down at the bloody wizard who had seemingly walked into her life like Prince Charming to her Cinderella. How long ago that already seemed now! She rocked Harry and crooned soothing words.

With a cough Harry seemed to come back to himself. Lilith let him sit up and couldn't help but give a cry of disgust when he proceeded to vomit up some flesh.

Harry turned to her and with a perfectly calm voice said, "I solemnly swear that rat does not taste like chicken." His eyes then rolled back as he fainted back into Lilith's arms.

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Amelia Bones took off her monocle and with a quick charm cleaned it before carefully replacing it. She wondered for the hundredth time whether she should try Muggle laser eye surgery. Of course she would have to try and explain why she only needed it in one eye. For the hundredth time she cursed herself for being too slow and getting hit with the curse which had messed up her vision in her left eye in the first place.

When the call had come in, Director Bones decided to come personally observe the scene even though she normally didn't do so. Beyond the security concerns she didn't want to have her field team leaders feel like she was looking over their shoulders. However this had been the biggest Death Eater attack since the fight at the Ministry and she wanted to check it out. Even with some of their top members in Azkaban, her analysts had been surprised at how quiet the Death Eaters had been. Sure there were still Muggle sport killings and the occasional killing of someone who had obviously refused to support the Death Eater cause but that was about it. Prior to the Ministry fight, her people had been predicting direct attacks on Ministry officials and maybe even a direct assault targeting her led

by Voldemort personally. None of that had happened and Amelia found it a bit disquieting even if the peace was nice.

The DMLE director looked around and gave a grateful sigh. As much as the scene was a mess, she had to admit it was nice that a magical battle came with a ready made excuse to help cover it up. Potter's rupturing of the gas line was effective as it was beneficial to the later cover-up. Her contacts in the London Metropolitan Police were happy about it as well. Even with obliations and other spells there always seemed to be things that were missed which kept cropping up later making life miserable for cop and auror alike. As security cameras were proliferating and more and more Muggles had video cameras, it was practically impossible to sanitize a magical scene like this on the first go around. She had a good feeling that this scene wouldn't end up on the Internet or shows talking about the 'shadowy world that exists next to our own' one found on BBC Two late at night.

Amelia sighed. When she was a rookie auror it had been enough that even if a witness said they had seen magic, no one believed them. Now when something weird happened the Muggles started investigating to find out what 'really' was going on. She cursed the Yank show The X-Files for now it seemed there were hordes of Britons who were convinced the 'truth was out there' and that Her Majesty's Government was hiding something. While these Muggles thought they were looking for evidence that M-5 had aliens under wraps or some such twaddle the real truth would freeze their souls. Sometimes over a pint (or four) she wondered if the Magical world simply could not stay hidden anymore. There was talk of integrating cameras into cell phones which could be ready as early as next year. As if those damn spy satellites weren't enough of a problem without every Tom, Dick and Jane having a camera on them!

Shaking off her thoughts she made her way over to where Potter was sitting on the steps of a flat with a blanket around him. Auror Tonks had already been transferred to St. Mungo's. The medi-witch had assured the Director that she'd be fine. Narcissa Black had been a surprise. She was running interference for Potter and kept everyone away from him except the Muggleborn girl who was sitting behind Potter, hugging him to her.

Amelia shook her head. She wasn't sure if it was good or bad but Potter had some firepower at his command now with Narcissa Black.

The Director had always suspected that 90% of what came out of Lucius Malfoy's mouth had been either scripted or planned by the one-time Black. While Malfoy's could be charming and ingratiating when they wanted to be, their House were never the plotters that House Black was.

It was said House Black served intrigue for breakfast, misdirection for dinner and blackmail for supper. When it came to power politics, the Black family always came at you with their A game on. It was probably why there were so few left considering how dangerous they were.

Amelia was also glad that the intelligence on Narcissa had her hating Voldemort and had been more interested in the 'normal' power games of the magical elite which she had played through her husband. This meant she could be a real asset if the DMLE could keep Voldemort's people from assassinating her.

Amelia walked over to where Potter sat. A curt jerk of her head and narrowing of her good eye told Narcissa Black that she was not going to be denied. She stopped a few feet from where Potter sat with his head back and eyes closed against the pretty girl holding him. He had a look of used food as Amelia's dead husband would say.

"Ms. Moon, I need to talk to Mr. Potter privately for a moment. I suspect he will be along shortly." Amelia said not unkindly.

Harry opened his eyes. He looked deep into the Director's eyes and seemed to search them for a moment. Harry relaxed and turned to the teenage girl. "Go on Lilith, just knock and have Dobby set you up for the night if you want. I'm thinking it might be best to stay with me tonight for safety's sake. I should be along in a bit."

Amelia couldn't help but smile at the look of tenderness on the young woman's face. "Okay Harry but I'll be waiting for you. I'll be looking out the window to keep track of you. I'm not letting you out of your promise. Besides, I've never seen a crime scene being worked before."

Lilith said. With a quick kiss to Harry's cheek she stood.

Before the young witch could leave Amelia caught her eye. "Ms. Moon, my aurors will be taking your statements tomorrow along with Lord Potter's so it is best that you stay here tonight. Unlike Muggle cops who need to interrogate you right away we find it better for you to have a night to sleep before doing a pensieve reading. It helps make the memories clearer and more readable. I took the liberty of having one of the aurors contact your brother. We assured him you are fine and that you won't be coming home till later tomorrow."

The young girl visibly brightened, "Why thank you Madam Director! That was incredibly thoughtful. Susan has always bragged at how wonderful you are!"

Director Bones shrugged with a slight smile, "We 'Puffs stick together."

"Badger Pride!" Lilith replied with a happy laugh and then walked up the street and seemingly vanished.

"I see that you have reapplied the Fidelius charm on Grimmauld Place, Lord Potter," Amelia said dryly.

"I would prefer Lord Black if you can't just call me Harry," the teen said tiredly. He was amazed how much he already missed having Lilith's arms around him.

"Indeed? Well then Lord Black, you gave quite a show tonight, quite a show indeed," the Director said. To Harry's surprise she sat down next to him. The familiarity of this shook him a bit. He was expecting the stern head of the DMLE to grill him and perhaps be critical of all the damage the fight had done.

"I shall cut directly to the chase then, Lord Black. You did very well tonight. You kept your head and kept your party alive. Like you did at the Ministry, you showed the ability to think under fire as well as being proactive and taking the fight to the enemy. Auror Tonks suffered treatable injuries and you managed to not only kill or drive off a band of Death Eaters but do it in such a way as to make covering it up easier. For that, you have my thanks." Amelia said with approval in her voice.

Harry wasn't not so sure that her compliments was what she wanted to say, "I sense a 'but' coming up."

The Director gave a predatory smile, "Most perceptive, Lord Black. For now, just between you and me, I want some answers from you and I'd rather have you tell me the truth. I will get the truth if I have to but that would leave a paper trail and for now I'm not sure that is in the best interests of Britain."

"What do you want to know?" Harry asked warily.

"I want to know how Peter Pettigrew died," Amelia said simply.

Harry blanched at this. Lilith has cleaned him up prior to the aurors coming up to question them as they arrived at the scene. Harry had hoped that they would assume that he had transfigured an animal, like the wolves the Death Eaters had conjured, to kill Pettigrew. From comments he had overheard this was exactly what they thought. The Director, on the other hand, obviously saw much clearer even with only one good eye.

Seeing him hesitate, Amelia went on, "You see Lord Black I think I know what happened and I think it would be best that the 'how' remain secret for now. Why were you and the Dark Lord in the Department of Mysteries in May if not to retrieve a prophecy only you could retrieve? Why does the Headmaster become even more vague and opaque than usual when I talk to him about the topic? I may not have walked a beat since your parents were in Hogwarts, Lord Black, but I can still smell when something isn't right when it comes to you."

Harry just stared at the Director as she started ticking items off on her fingers. "So I thinking one, there is a prophecy relating to you and the Dark Lord. Two, the Headmaster has taken an interest in your life since the Dark Lord was supposedly defeated the first time makes me think you have an important role yet to play. Three, with a prophecy involved it means the Headmaster probably knows something that he isn't telling. Four, his Divinations teacher hasn't left Hogwarts more than a few times since the Dark Lord fell. Dumbledore even intervened when Umbridge wanted her thrown out of Hogwarts. When taken together it leaves me smelling something is afoot and I don't like not knowing what it is."

Harry blinked at all this but then chided himself. This was the director of the DMLE after all. The highest ranking witch in the

Ministry didn't get there by being stupid. "Okay, I grant you all of that. How does it relate to tonight? Voldemort has been after me since I was a baby. Nothing has changed."

Amelia leaned in closer and lowered her voice, "Oh but you've changed, Lord Black. I can tell that your magic has recently been unbound and that in itself raises a host of questions. Then there is the fact that you've been acting atypically since your godfather's death. Not unusual given the circumstances but I know what trauma does to a person, by God I do! You aren't acting like a distraught teen. I would bet you haven't even given yourself time to grieve the loss of Sirius, have you?"

Harry shook his head glumly. He felt like he had betrayed his godfather once again. Here had been a man who had eaten rats (something Harry could now sort of relate to) to help look after him and Harry hadn't taken the time to properly deal with his loss.

Amelia nodded, "I thought so. As bad as I'm sure it makes you feel, Lord Black, it is rather natural. You have a lot going on and you probably feel that giving into grief will weaken you. You need to grieve because it will come and the longer you wait the worse it will get."

Harry saw how the Director's face fell as she turned away to seemingly look at the scene in front of them. Harry doubted the woman saw any of the aurors working to clean the battle scene of magical traces. "When my husband was killed I had recently been made Deputy Director and so I felt I couldn't afford the time to grieve. I almost got a team of aurors killed because the grief was coloring my decision making process. I made some bad calls and others almost paid the ultimate price for my mistakes. I doubt you want any of your friends to die considering your testimony about how you fought to keep the others of the so called 'Ministry Six' from coming with you back in May."

Harry nodded. Maybe going back to Hogwarts was the smart thing regardless of all the things which needing doing there. It would allow him a safe place to grieve before doing what had to be done. Harry realized he had to stop thinking he could go it alone and stop thinking he could somehow just stop feeling. Tool of Fate or not, he was still human. Luna had been right again when she said it would

be his own heart which needed to guide him. He had to be sure his heart wasn't filled with loss and regret.

While Draco had an eventual fatal date with destiny coming to him, Harry knew the whole incident on the train had really been about Sirius. Harry's rage at Draco was probably more rage at himself. Draco had simply reminded Harry that he had allowed himself three months to go by without hardly stopping to grieve for the man who died helping to protect him.

Amelia waited and watched as various emotions played over Harry's face. She was heartened that her words seemed to have led him into making the connections he needed to make if he wanted to work through his loss properly. When he finally looked back up at her she went on, "So that brings us back to changes. Tell me Lord Black did you see a beautician while you were gallivanting around Diagon Alley today?"

"What? Uh...no, why would you even think that?" Harry asked. It certainly wasn't the question he was expecting!

"No? Then perhaps Narcissa decided you needed to look more like a Lord perhaps?" Amelia asked with a sly smile.

"Well yeah...I wanted to get rid of my cousin's old cast-off clothes and Narcissa said I need clothes that fit my new status as a Lord." Harry replied.

"So your hair just happened to grow a meter since May by itself then, Lord Black?" Amelia asked innocently.

Crap! Harry thought as he hung his head to cover up the guilty look he knew he probably had. He had forgotten his hair! Before they had left Grimmauld Place for the dinner date, Harry had taken a shower since he knew he smelled like sex. Afterwards Narcissa had Harry change into some of his new clothes so he'd look his best for his date. The Hufflepuff girl had been delighted in the change when she had come down from her own freshening up. Lilith told Harry he really looked like the Prince Charming she'd always dreamed off. Narcissa, however, had said he needed to grow out his hair in the style of wizard Lords to complete the picture and Lilith had agreed. While Harry hadn't been sure if he would like it, he had decided to humor the girls and grew his hair out.

Narcissa had quickly given his hair a going through. He had to admit it did seem to make his hair more manageable. While grooming him she told him he carried off the long hair look better than even Lucius did. She had joked about how vain her ex-husband was over his long locks; he apparently spent longer doing his hair than Narcissa did her own. Considering how much time Draco supposedly spent in front of the mirror each morning from the rumors Harry had heard, the apple had indeed not fallen far from the tree.

Harry had forgotten all about it and maybe even had just thought his hair had reverted back to normal after his surprising animagus transformation. After he had come out of his faint, he really hadn't been up to noticing much.

Harry looked back up to see the Director watching him intently, the sly smile still on her lips. He couldn't help but feel like a kid caught with his hand in the biscuit tin. "Busted, I guess." Harry admitted.

"Busted indeed! Don't take it so hard, Lord Black. My husband was a limited metamorphagus like you obviously are so I know better than most at what I'm seeing. I'm sure anyone else would just assume you used a lengthening charm. I know, however, all the magic you were tossing around would cancel that charm right out." The Director said.

"My Darrell was quite adept at using his skills. You probably don't think much about your abilities considering you know Auror Tonks. Let me assure you with a bit of practice you can do a lot with a change in eye color, messing with your hair and rearranging bits of your face. Darrell always said just making himself have more prominent cheek-bones seemed to throw off even people who knew him." Amelia explained.

"But this isn't about me being able to change my hair, is it?" Harry asked. He had a feeling Director Bones knew exactly how Pettigrew had died and was just confirming it.

"No, but it explains how you turned into some animagus form tonight which is what I know you did. Tell me Lord Black, did your father or Sirius Black leave you any notes about how they became illegal animagi back at Hogwarts?" Amelia asked.

"Yes, but while I read them I wasn't about to experiment. From what I read it was bloody dangerous even with three others there to help if something went wrong. Not something I was going to try alone and without a wand. Plus Professor McGonagall always goes on and on about the dangers of Transfigurations." Harry confirmed.

"Good answer because I didn't really expect you had. Professor McGonagall is quite right about the dangers. I've seen the results of people experimenting and it isn't pretty. However there have been a few cases of where a limited metamorphagus had spontaneously achieved an animagus form under times of incredible stress. All of these cases involved witches or wizards with powerful magical cores. In your case, I can feel your magical core being recently unbound has left you in a state of serious magical flux which makes you even more susceptible to this type of accidental magic. I would wager you found that you had more magic than your body could process during the fight, correct?" Amelia asked.

Harry nodded, "Right as I tossed the car, I thought my magic might burst my body like a balloon popping."

"A very apt analogy and one I'm afraid is rather gruesomely true if you are not careful." Amelia said with utter seriousness. "So your case has all the hallmarks that you transformed without meaning to. What was your form, if I might ask?"

"A Grim," Harry said quietly. Again the sadness over not grieving properly over Sirius rose up in him.

"Ah...very appropriate, Lord Black. Considering what I know of your Patronus form, it seems like you carry the spirit of the Marauders inside of you."

"Not anymore...I spit out what I got from Pettigrew," Harry said disgustedly.

Amelia couldn't help but laugh at this. "Good! I'm glad you can still joke about this. I'm not going to tell you that you won't have nightmares about tonight. You've already gone through more at Hogwarts than most aurors do in a decade. I will say, however, that I will be sending Madam Pomfrey the name of my personal trauma therapist Leticia Radford. It is not weakness to talk about things that bother you Lord Black. Sharing the burden may not solve things but

I've always found that just venting is often the best way to work through things so the healing process can move on. I give you my solemn word anything you say will be confidential between you and her. Due to my own secrets that need to be protected, Leticia has ways of walling off what she hears so she cannot reveal it. She'll die or go insane before she'll reveal those secrets."

Harry stroked his chin, not realizing he was unconsciously imitating Dumbledore's habit of stroking his beard. "I think I may take you up on that offer Director. But why do you want to keep me being an animagus a secret? I'm all for it since I've enough weirdness in my life. It is bad enough that I'm a known Parselmouth."

"Lord Black if I'm right in my suspicions about a prophecy regarding you and the Dark Lord, then it seems you are the key to defeating him. Any advantage you have is thus important to the safety of all Britain. Having a secret animagus form could be crucial in escaping if things go bad or even defeating the Dark Lord. Similarly I would advise against letting any more people in on your metamorphagus skills. If you like the look, and as a woman I must say you wear it well, I would occasionally shrink your hair back and say you forgot to charm it. Eventually your hair will grow out and you won't have to worry about it." Amelia advised

"Sneaky!" Harry said impressed by the simple ploy.

"I told you, my late husband Darrell found that he didn't need the full abilities like Nymphadora Tonks has to fool people. Remember that Lord Black, people see what they expect to see. Sometimes the art of hiding and deception is just projecting what they expect to see and anything that doesn't fit will be ignored." Amelia's eyes bored into his, "I'm sure you've noticed no matter what you do, people expect to see the Boy-Who-Lived and that's what they see, yes?"

Harry nodded grimly, "On target, Director! That or they see what ever version of me the Daily Prophet is currently printing."

The Director gave an approving nod and stood. "Then I see we understand each other. There are Dark forces marshaled against you Lord Black, many of which I fear are supposedly on your side. I'm glad to see that not only can you take care of yourself but you are aware of your situation. As much as I am loathed to admit it, Narcissa Black will be a great asset to you. You may not have to

trust her but she can be an important source for information for you to mine."

Harry's face went dark and he stood as well. The Director had reminded of something he felt he needed to warn her of. "Director Bones, I would like to ask you something. Do you know who broke House Potter?"

Director Bones sighed, "I wish I did Lord Black, I wish I did. I have some suspicions but when I had my team look into it they ended up chasing their tails. I can only say that I don't believe it was Death Eaters or their cronies. Again, I fear many of your enemies may be masquerading as your friends and allies."

Harry gave a slight bow, "Thank you Director, I appreciate your candor. Now I wish to do the same. My ancestral House has been gutted. I have been stolen from and almost from the minute I first stepped onto Diagon Alley I have had my name blown one way to the other in the avenue of public opinion. Others manipulate my 'legend' for their own ends. I've seen things, heard things; believe things which tell me a storm is coming. I am giving you fair warning, Director; I am going to be that storm. I will say to you what I told the Headmaster. I refuse to play by other people's rules anymore. Nemo Me Impune Lacessit is my watchword."

The Director gave Harry an appraising look. "What do you intend," she ask noncommittally.

"I intend to show people what vengeance looks like. I want to remind my enemies that no amount of gold or influence will protect them. As you said, Director, Narcissa Black is a trove of information. Just today she was pointing out some of the finer points of the old dueling customs as a way to right wrongs. While frowned upon, the rules and laws governing it have never been repealed. I just wanted to give you fair warning that the honor of my House has been sullied for the last time. An attack upon me or my friends will be met with like force."

The Director met Harry's determined gaze for a moment. "Very well Lord Black, but understand one thing. I uphold the law. While I have been stymied from time to time by politics, to the law I am true. Step over that line and I will treat you like any other criminal. Do you understand this, Lord Black?"

Harry nodded, "Perfectly Director." I will make sure that you won't catch me, Harry thought to himself. He didn't really expect the Director to fully understand the depths he was about to go to back up his threats. What the Director had said earlier also applied to her. She expected to see one thing and which wasn't what he was anymore. He would, however, need to revert a bit back to "Harry Potter" if only to help cover up his tracks.

A commotion at the border of the park which was roped off with police tape caught both their attention. Harry could immediately tell from the amount of red hair in the party that the Hogwarts/Order of the Phoenix guilt party had arrived. Suddenly Harry felt the fatigue settle upon him again like a robe made of lead. He politely excused himself to which the Director responded with an understanding nod.

As Harry made his way over to where Narcissa was talking with an auror, he noticed Lilith staring down at him from the upstairs window of Grimmauld Place. Seeing his look she smiled and waved. Harry gave a small wave back before quietly coming up next to Narcissa. She apparently was helping to identify some of the bodies of the Death Eaters. Seeing the look on Harry's face as he came up she immediately excused herself.

Harry looked over again at the party being stopped from entering the scene...at least for the moment. He thought he could see McGonagall's pointed hat as well as a familiar head of bushy brown hair. He could easily hear Molly Weasley's voice cut through the hubbub around him. He doubted the aurors could keep them at bay for long.

He turned to Narcissa, "Cissy, I just can't deal with that lot right now. I am knackered, I still can feel and taste Pettigrew in my mouth and I'm really not up for this sort of confrontation. Can you handle it for me...tactfully?" He asked.

Narcissa gave a warm smile, "Of course I will my lord." She looked over at the party and then back to Harry. "It is amazing to think of all that has happened in the last twelve hours. I am not surprised it is finally catching up to you."

Harry gave a short barking laugh. "Yeah I feel like screaming 'stop the train, I want to get off!' before anything else happens."

Narcissa laid a hand on his shoulder and whispered into his ear. "Harry, go upstairs, take a shower. Maybe make love to that pretty girl. She's been watching you the whole time...or not. You can always save it for tomorrow when you are better rested. I've been told morning sex is rather nice. I'm thinking just resting in her arms tonight will do you a world of good. Go to her now and I'll deal with McGonagall and Molly Weasley."

Harry hesitated, "Could you make sure Hermione knows this is nothing personal? Luna and I aren't sure about her yet but she really has been my best friend all this time even though I was too stupid to see it. If she is merely a pawn in all this, I don't want to ruin the friendship by having her think I'm blowing her off. I need more enemies like I need a hole in my head."

Narcissa took Harry by the shoulders and turned him around towards Grimmauld Place. "I'll take care of Ms. Granger. If anything I'll blame Director Bones. I'll tell them you can't speak to anyone till you've been fully debriefed which won't be till tomorrow. From what Draco has said about the girl in the past, I gather she will accept that sort of explanation."

Harry gave a snort but didn't resist when Narcissa gave him a bit of a shove. Looking up at Lilith, he realized that right now a shower and falling asleep in her arms sounded exactly what he needed right now.

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Hermione Granger was thoroughly British. She drank tea, she queued up patiently for the Tube and she loved the Royalty while at the same time having serious doubts whether they were still relevant in the modern age. Yet right now Hermione might as well be a Yank Indian with a feathered bonnet and tomahawk for she was on the warpath!

Ever since the start of term she had been trying to reach Harry's side and talk to him. She had to talk to him! As much as it had shocked her to see it on the train, Hermione felt she knew where Harry's rage was coming from and what to do about it. Everyone, even Ron, never really saw Harry except as The-Boy-Who-Lived. They might get to know Harry, laugh with him, play Quidditch with

him, but deep down they all missed the real Harry. Sometimes Hermione felt that the Wizarding world in general seemed to think Harry was like Athena; he had sprung fully grown at age eleven from out of Dumbledore's forehead to save them from the Dark Lord.

Harry, she knew, was actually nothing like that. He was a private person and while personable, he kept his feelings close. So much so it wasn't till her Third Year that she belatedly realized that Harry's relatives abused him. Harry exhibited many of the classical symptoms; so much so she questioned why Madam Pomfrey had done nothing.

Surely she had to have seen the scars on his back? Hermione had only noticed them when Harry had taken off his towel after they all got back to the Gryffindor Common Room after the Second Task. Since then she had taken the time to notice he had others on his arms and legs that couldn't be accounted for by his adventures. Was it that people saw the Curse Scar and ignored everything else?

Harry's attack on Draco surely had been triggered by something the white-haired ponce had said about Sirius' death. Growing up with nothing and then losing the only thing he had ever had to a family had to have triggered it. Hermione was desperate to talk to Harry about this because she was deathly afraid her attempts to stop him made Harry hate her now.

So for weeks she had tried to get past the detection charms and minor traps guarding the way up to where Harry was supposedly being treated for the affects of being possessed by Voldemort. She had almost made it a few times but every time she was thwarted and had to endure being chided by either Professor McGonagall or even Headmaster Dumbledore himself.

It didn't help her mood for all she was supposedly 'the smartest witch of her age' she had missed the most blindingly simple method to get to Harry...all because her fear of flying. To have Luna, Loony Lovegood of all people, casually mention to her during lunch that Harry seemed to be in good health and was actually keeping up on his studies even if his bed was dreadfully lumpy was almost more than Hermione could bear. It was made worse to find out Luna had simply asked Professor Flitwick where Umbridge had stashed Harry's Firebolt under the pretense of giving it to Ron for safekeeping. With Firebolt in hand, Luna had simply flown up to

Harry's window! Weeks and weeks of studying, plotting and planning only to fail again and again and Luna managed it on her first try!

While it heartened her to hear Harry seemed to have calmed down and was actually using his time wisely to keep up with the class work he was missing, Hermione had a funny feeling after talking with the willowy Ravenclaw. She seemed different. At first Hermione put it down as an after-effects of the fight at the Department of Mysteries but the longer she talked to her she found herself questioning that assumption. There was something new in those mostly unblinking blue eyes. Plus, how did she find out that Harry's bed was lumpy?

Hermione shook her head to clear it. She needed to focus on the now. The scene in front of her was a disaster. The magical fight had clearly destroyed the little park she remembered walking through a few times last summer when they had been staying at...at wherever it had been she had stayed with Ron and Harry before start of term. The whole neighborhood was damaged; most of the windows were broken and there was debris everywhere. She overheard one of the aurors talk about a gas main rupturing.

Hermione listened intently as Professor McGonagall calmly tried to talk her way past the auror who had stopped them after they had apparated in. Mrs. Weasley was also talking but she was anything but calm. Hermione felt the pair made an excellent good witch/bad witch pair. However the auror didn't seem to be buying it. Hermione was pretty sure she knew why; she could see Director Bones of the DMLE talking with Harry so she didn't think the auror was going to crack with her around. If he didn't crack, Hermione was going to have to get ignorant. She was going to see Harry and that was final!

Hermione ground her teeth in frustration. She was almost close enough to give a shout to Harry and yet he might as well be on the Continent. She cursed Mrs. Weasley's slowness! She had to admit she had been a bit...peevish when Professor McGonagall had come into the Common Room to collect her and Ron to go to Harry. Ginny had certainly been surprised when Hermione had made some pointed and rather snarky remarks about how now the Order of the Phoenix needed her to talk to Harry when they had been keeping her from him for weeks. However in the end she knew it was just her pride talking; she would agree to take Divinations and drop Arithmancy to talk to Harry.

Yet when they went to the Burrow to get Mrs. Weasley, the elder witch had gone on and on about the need to grab the Twins. It had delayed them for quite a while before Mrs. Weasley had given up trying to find them. Hermione had asked what "Busy" meant on the family clock but Ron had merely grunted and shrugged. Grunting was something Ron had been doing a lot of lately. Hermione didn't feel he should be at school after being attacked by those Cognivores. His school work, never very stellar, was off even worse and he seemed twitchy.

The only thing that he seemed to excel at was Quidditch. Ginny had told him Ron usually played great when with friends but up against people he didn't know he had issues. After watching the first game of the season, Hermione hadn't seen any problems with that. If anything, when it came to Quidditch Ron seemed to be channeling Draco Malfoy since he would be arrogant and boastful. He could also be a right git.

Katie Bell, the team captain, had called Hermione aside as a prefect and friend of Ron's to warn her about trouble brewing in regards to Ron. Apparently he was having trouble with the whole concept of 'what happens in the locker room stays in the locker room' due to his sister. Ginny was apparently quite passionate in coming down from games and it drove Ron spare. Hermione had tried to help but there were times she felt Ron was actually going to hit her so she told Katie she had done her best.

Even now Ron seemed to radiate discontent and boredom. Considering the chaos around him, Hermione couldn't help but be worried about him. He was, however, also getting on her nerves. Ron had actually seemed to resist wanting to come with them but McGonagall had put her foot down. Hermione wasn't sure what was up with Ron but his comments regarding Harry had gone downhill and now were much worse than they had been when Harry and he were estranged during their Fourth Year. It was just another thing that grated on Hermione of late.

So right now Hermione was very unhappy with certain members of the Weasley family. If they had left when they should have, they might have caught up with Harry. Hermione looked around at all the damage and realized the possibility that they could have also ended up dead. Hermione shook her head in annoyance at that thought. She was sure if they had left on time they'd have been waiting

patiently in...wherever and could have been there to help Harry when he needed them.

At an indignant squawk from Mrs. Weasley she realized, in her woolgathering, she had missed Harry finish up talking with the Director. He was now talking with a statuesque woman which Hermione shockingly realized was Narcissa Malfoy! Harry seemed to look right at her before Mrs. Malfoy took Harry by the shoulders, turned him around and practically pushed him away. As she did so, Hermione gave a slight gasp. It was one thing that Harry was wearing clothes that put his dress robes he wore to the Yule Ball to shame, even if they were soiled now, but somehow his hair had grown down past his shoulders!

In all the years Hermione had known Harry she had never seen his hair any longer or shorter than it was the first day they met on the train to Hogwarts. It was as if his hair was locked into a permanent tribute to his father James. Now Harry had locks that Draco Malfoy would envy! This seemingly minor thing among all the chaos around them disturbed Hermione for reasons she couldn't put her finger on.

She watched him as he walked away, his whole frame a picture of fatigue. Her heart turned over. Life never seemed to let up on her best friend and here she was unable to comfort him! She was about to shout out to him but then he simply vanished. Hermione blinked at this before she realized Harry had obviously crossed the Fidelius boundary.

Hermione felt her heart sink; she was denied again! However she noticed Mrs. Malfoy coming towards them so perhaps there was still hope. Hermione wondered why she was even here. She had overheard Professor McGonagall saying something about the Malfoys to Mrs. Weasley earlier but she didn't pay it any mind as she was quizzing Ginny about Luna at the time. Hermione noticed that Draco's mother had changed; her hair was now all the same luscious raven-black of the Black family. Strange how Harry's hair was the same color considering he was a Potter.

As Mrs. Malfoy drew near it was not surprisingly the first salvo came from Mrs. Weasley, Hermione thought wryly. "What have you done with Harry you...you..."

She was interrupted by Professor McGonagall laying a hand on her arm. "Molly please, there is no need for that. Well, Narcissa, what is it?" she said in a rather arch tone.

Hermione was surprised at the seemingly warm smile that Mrs. Malfoy got on her face. She seemed to be enjoying the anger radiating off Mrs. Weasley. "I am merely here to convey a message from my Lord Black. He wishes me to tell you all that after the traumatic events of tonight he is very sorry but he cannot see you now."

Hermione couldn't help but blurt out, "Mrs. Malfoy why can't we go up and just talk with him for a minute?"

Narcissa gave what seemed to be a sad sigh, "I'm sorry Ms. Granger, but I am afraid Director Bones needs him to get some rest before tomorrow. The aurors need him rested so as to get a good pensieve reading tomorrow. So please don't feel like this is personal on Lord Black's part."

Ron spoke up for the first time in about an hour, "What's all this Lord Black rubbish? He's Harry bloody Potter if it slipped your Death Eater brain!"

"Language, Ron!" both Hermione and Mrs. Weasley said in unison.

Narcissa didn't seem ruffled by the outburst. "I call him Lord Black for that is what he is and what he wishes to be called. Ms. Granger, you might not be aware of it but James Potter's grandmother was Dorea Black. Today we found out that Lily Potter was a descendent of Isla Black. Of course by right of blood he is formally Lord Potter-Peverell-Black after the events of today considering he is also the rightful heir to House Peverell through both his parents. Just as I am now magically divorced from Lord Malfoy and find myself Narcissa Black again."

"Just what do you think you are doing here with Harry? The last thing he needs right now is someone as evil as you hanging on him! He needs the bosom of his family right now! So let us through so we can cut through all this Black rubbish!" Mrs. Weasley raged.

Narcissa seemed to draw up into herself. Hermione noted how while she wasn't that much taller than Professor McGonagall, she seemed

to be able to project a sense that she was towering over them. She also, Hermione saw, had a death glare to die for.

"What I am doing is what the Head of House Black wishes me to do. At Lord Black's request I am acting as his personal secretary. As for his reasoning why he wishes to be known as Lord Black I can only guess." Narcissa's eyes narrowed and they seemed to lock with those of Professor McGonagall. "However considering how the once proud House Potter has been reduced to a penniless shell with only a few hastily saved heirlooms and a title in Parliament, perhaps my Lord Black simply chooses to use a title that hasn't been sullied by unworthy hands."

Mrs. Weasley seemed to swell up like she was going to explode. Again Professor McGonagall cut her off. "Be that as it may, I insist we see Mr. Potter. As a representative of his magical guardian, I have the right."

Narcissa gave a dismissive gesture, "Please, you are well aware that my Lord Black is fully emancipated, has his OWLs and now is the head of three Ancient & Noble Houses. The so called guardianship of Albus Dumbledore was negated the moment Director Ragnok declared him an adult. If you wish to play games, Minerva, go back to Hogwarts and lying to your students."

Ginny piped up, "Mrs. Mal...er Ms. Black, are you sure we can't talk to Harry? We haven't seen him since the start of term. We miss him and he hasn't had anyone to talk to for over a month!" Ginny gave Professor McGonagall a poisonous look, "Hermione tried to see him but was prevented from doing so."

"I'm sorry Ms. Weasley but I cannot overrule the wishes of the Director of the DMLE. He did want me to be sure to tell you he wishes he could talk to you but between fatigue and Director Bone's orders he cannot. However, my Lord Black had intended to return to Hogwarts tomorrow to continue his education. In light of tonight's events I feel he will be delayed at least a day. I'm sure he will be happy to see you then."

Turning to Professor McGonagall, Narcissa continued in a seemingly sweet voice, "In fact, Deputy Headmistress, I shall need to meet with you regarding this. My Lord Black has expressed some affection to the room he spent his first night of term in. It was so

much better than his later accommodations. As an emancipated Lord I'm sure you are well aware of his right to a private room, yes?"

Professor McGonagall looked like she had a mouthful of Dumbledore's sourest lemon drops. "I'm sure we can accommodate Lord Black's request."

Narcissa beamed in triumph. She turned to Ginny and Hermione with an odd gleam in her eye, "As for Lord Black being alone, I assure you he had a good evening prior to the attack. He and Ms. Moon, along with Auror Tonks, had a delightful time at a Muggle restaurant before all this unpleasantness. I dare say Ms. Moon is probably giving my Lord Black some needed comfort even as we speak."

Both Hermione and Ginny mouth's dropped open in shock. Hermione barely heard Ron's muttered, "Him with a bird? Not likely the ruddy poof!"

Narcissa cut off any further questions, "I'm sorry, but today has been a very long day and I myself have been through much. Lord Black is sorry he cannot receive you but I'm sure he will be in much better spirits in a day or two. Till then, I ask that you be patient." With that she turned and walked away, ignoring the wrathful comments from Mrs. Weasley before she too disappeared into the Fidelius boundary.

Hermione and Ginny exchanged a bemused look as they ignored Professor McGonagall and Ginny's mother arguing. Ms. Moon could only mean Lilith Moon, Hermione's old roommate's Hufflepuff friend. She hadn't the funding to return to Hogwarts this year after her scholarship ran out. When and how did Harry meet her? More importantly how did she end up on a bloody date with him? Moreover how is it that she of all people was up in his house while his best friends were stuck outside? Harry could barely kiss Cho last year and now he was taking a witch on a dinner date? Plus who knew what was going on in the hidden house right now? Hermione gave a wrathful snort, 'giving my Lord Black some needed comfort' indeed!

Hermione didn't know the answers to these questions but she was going to find out!

XxXxX

A/N: I find that there is a big difference in wanting to write exciting magical duels and actually writing them. My hat is off to JBern for making those duels/fights in fics like Bungle In The Jungle and Lies I've Lived seem to come alive. I find my own attempts to be sorely lacking in comparison.

Barely Beta: In order to keep you folks from killing me after drawing out the suspense, I do ask be kind in regards to this. I'm sure I will find 1.21 giga-errors the minute I post this. My email is on my profile so is you see stuff, let me know.

Marcus Flint, repent offender: According to the HP Lexicon, later editions (US? UK?) of the series corrected the problem inherent in the fact that Flint was supposed to graduate in Harry's second year but showed up in Book 3. I don't think it is a stretch to have some people flunk out of Hogwarts considering how poor the teaching is compared to what is tested.

Americanism: Yes I freely admit the "Call Before You Dig" sign is something I see all the time around town. While I am sure they have a different motto in the UK, I'd bet they have something similar...although I highly doubt their sign has a beaver wearing a safety vest w/a hard hat on it.

Spells: For anyone interested in the meanings. I don't know Latin and so the word order is probably wrong. I used what sounded better rather than what might be correct. For example Deus Lux translates (roughly) "God is Light instead of what I wanted "Light of God" but Lux Deus sounds clunky if one was saying it as a spell.

* Fulmen Illisus = Lightning Strike

* Malicus Angor = Malicious Suffocation

* Igneus Obex = Fiery Bolt

* Conus Gelum = Cone of Frost, a spell mentioned in Lies I've Lived by Jbern

* Sagita Cataegis = Hurricane of Arrows

* Deus Lux = Light of God

* Tonitrus Frigor = Thunder clap or burst

Camera Phones: First camera phone picture was taken on June 11 1997.

CHAPTER NINE – I WATCHED THEE

GRIMMAULD PLACE, LONDON – SEPTEMBER 28th 1996 – MORNING

Harry woke up and for just a second went completely tense before realizing that not being alone in bed was a good thing. He chided himself about how he needed to get better at waking up in the morning with a pretty witch.

For that is what he certainly had. Rising up slowly on an elbow, Harry looked down on the chestnut-haired girl who was clutching an overstuffed teddy bear with a peaceful look on her face. Harry smiled to himself about how happy Lilith had been when Dobby had easily popped over to her room to bring her 'Ted-Ted' back to her. Harry had teased her and acted hurt that Lilith didn't seem to think he would not be enough to fulfill her cuddling needs. She had simply pointed out that Ted-Ted didn't mind being drooled on during sleep. They had shared a laugh before settling down for the evening; Harry spooning against Lilith as she snuggled against him with her teddy bear hugged close to her.

It had been a peaceful end of a night that had been anything but that. However bad the events of the prior evening had been, especially with Tonks getting wounded, the night had proven to be well worth it in the end.

GRIMMAULD PLACE, LONDON, SEPTEMBER 27th 1996 – EVENING

The hot water felt good on his face. Harry had often felt there was something religious about water. How a hot shower could make a sick person feel better or make one feel as if their cares, sins and worries were being excised down the drain. Right now Harry knew that pieces of Peter, a man he had killed no matter how righteously, was what was swirling down the drain at the moment. Lilith hadn't been able to totally clean Harry up from the fury of his attack on the ex-rat before the aurors had showed up.

Harry hung his head. He was keyed up while at the same time feeling like Atlas with the Earth's weight of fatigue on his shoulders. Harry belated realized he had felt the same way after the fight at the Department of Mysteries but Sirius' death and the aftermath of being

possessed by Voldemort had muddled those feelings. Now he was feeling the full effects of realizing what had happened and how close he and his friends had been to death. Tonks had been right and he had blown her off, confident in his new abilities. Now she was at St. Mungo's and Lilith had almost died.

It was a testament of how tired he was that he didn't give a startled jerk when a pair of hands came around him and started to massage soap into his chest. He gave a sigh as he felt Lilith's breasts and then the rest of her body mold up against him. She nuzzled against his neck and Harry couldn't help but lift his head back to allow her more access.

"It wasn't your fault, Harry." Lilith murmured into his ear.

Harry did give a jerk at this and tensed under her roaming hands.

"No, no, don't go there Harry," Lilith cooed as her hands continued to caress him. It wasn't an erotic caress but one which felt to Harry like she was massaging the stress right out of him. "I knew you'd be in here and starting to feel like all of this was your fault."

Harry let out a breathy sigh as Lilith's tongue trailed from his shoulder up to the top of his ear. "You made a mistake Harry. Yes we both should have thought to have Tonks take us by side-along apparition back here. We could have been 'constantly vigilant' and been smarter." Lilith's hand's wandered south; one beginning to stroke Harry's rapidly expanding cock while the other played with his balls. "We were both thinking about this though, weren't we? You and I couldn't wait to put your glorious Tab A into my hot Slot B. We're teenagers Harry; we think like that."

Harry gave a groan as Lilith's hands left his stiffing member as she suddenly took by the shoulders and turned him to face her. Her chocolate colored eyes bored deep into his but they were filled with caring and affection and not disapproval. "Harry you saved our lives in an ambush I wonder if even the Headmaster could have gotten us out of. We know better now. You'll do better next time. Don't let what we had tonight, all that fun, be used as a cover to push people away. This attack could have happened while we were shopping earlier; would that mean you'd stop shopping in the Alley for stuff?"

Harry blinked at this. What was it with witches who seemed to read his mind as if he hadn't a mental screen to speak of?

Lilith seemed to sense his confusion and leaned in and kissed him thoroughly. After breaking the kiss she leaned against him, "Harry, I feel bad that I didn't join your D.A. last year but I was really focusing on my OWLs. However that didn't stop me from listening to what Susan and Hannah told about what you guys were doing. Susan was worried that as a Muggleborn I really should have been learning to defend myself. I just had too much going on at the time. Yet I remember how both of them felt you always kept a distance between the group and yourself. Like you were training them but would die rather than put any of them in danger."

Harry put his arm around her and just held her. Susan had indeed often accused him of thinking that it all came down to him and maybe Hermione and Ron. Even before knowing the prophecy, he had tried to keep everyone from becoming involved. Yet after listening to everything Luna had told him, everyone in Britain was involved. Plus it wasn't like he was the only one who had suffered due to Voldemort. Susan had lost her parents to the war just like he had. Hogwarts was filled with children who lost loved ones to the war; Harry wasn't special in that regard. Neville was practically as much an orphan as he was considering how much affection and support his Gran seemed to have given him growing up.

The pair just rocked against each other as the hot water cascaded down upon them. By unspoken consent they broke apart. Lilith kissed him again and then gave a happy smile and took up the soap and a wash cloth and began to scrub Harry. He had to admit it was a brilliant feeling. He reciprocated and the resulting soapy fun was erotic but somehow not in a seriously sexual way. Harry found he enjoyed running his fingers through Lilith's hair as he helped her wash it.

Often times his erection would get in the way and he could have easily initiated sex and taken her against the shower walls like he had done to Luna at Hogwarts. Harry didn't because it felt wrong; this was a time to enjoy more innocent pleasures. After the horror of the attack and all he had learned of late, Harry desperately clung to the illusion he was simply a teenager sneaking some soapy fun in while his parents were away as if he were a normal bloke.

Finally after toweling off, they had fallen into bed together. Harry couldn't help but laugh at Lilith's happiness over the immense, four-poster bed. She had bounced a bit upon it and told him how such a bed was practically a teenage girl's staple fantasy. When he asked about it, her reply had surprised him.

Lilith had looked at Harry with exasperation. "Come on Harry, all those teen witch books are just porn to girls. You need to remember we girls don't get off as much at looking a tasty body and bits as much as you blokes do. You guys look at Playwitch and we girls read trashy romance novels. A lot of it is all about emotion, commitment and above all stories of wizards telling us how much you can't survive without us!"

Harry chuckled at this, "So regardless of how much Lavender supposedly gets around, she's looking for Prince Charming?"

Lilith rolled her eyes, "Prat! I'm just saying for witches it's a bit different. Look it's all well and good for you wizards to shag hither and yon but it us gals who end up pregnant...like Sally-Anne."

Harry reached out and took Lilith's chin in his hands and kissed her. "Hey, none of that! I'm sorry; I shouldn't have said anything to bring that horrible event up."

Lilith shrugged, "It's the truth though Harry. Women always hope that nothing will happen and if it does their guy will stand by them but too often it doesn't. Look at how even when they are 'happily' married so many wizards are off shagging leaving the witch at home with the kids. I saw it all the time in the Alley and I've only been working there going on four months! To avoid the Twin's shop I would go by this one store which is a front for a high-end brothel. You wouldn't believe the people I'd see go in and out of there! People who supposedly are respectable members of our society."

Harry's face fell, "Is that what I'm doing? I've got money and power and I just bought you for the evening?"

Lilith sighed, sighed again and then suddenly hit Harry with a pillow. "Harry you are nothing like that! You didn't force me back at the shop; if anything you simply allowed me to attack you! You could have had your way with me in the shower just now and you didn't. You could have me tied up to the poster-boards and be doing

unspeakable things to me right now...but you haven't." Lilith leaned in and whispered into Harry's ear, "Although the last bit does sound a bit fun!"

Seeing the look on Harry's face she could tell he wasn't convinced. "Look Harry, remember what you told me back at the shop? I had made you feel good and you wanted to pay me back in kind. Do you think any of those Lords fucking their high-end whores give a shit about them? You know your buddy Seamus? I know for a fact he seems to think he's the Hogwarts Casanova but unless it is about him and him getting off he doesn't care. I remember Megan telling me he does just enough to a witch to get her to suck and fuck him. Then the minute he's shot his load he's off; probably to go brag up in your dorms."

Harry nodded, "Yeah, that's Seamus alright. He doesn't respect the gals either. I try not to listen but I hear him bragging to Ron and Dean when they have their sick wank contests. Seamus likes to brag how he cums all over the gals face if they won't swallow. He does it to degrade them. It's funny because when Katie Bell was working with me when I had...issues with sex, she loved it when I'd jacked off and would cum on her tits."

Lilith got a tingle at thinking about what that scene must have looked like. Katie Bell was one of the 'Flying Foxes of Gryffindor' for a reason. "She loved it, Harry, because you were sharing the experience. She was being there for you and you reciprocated by showing how much she turned you on. Do you know what a turn-on it was to watch your face as you started to cum? It was amazing!" Lilith's eyes shown with the memory of it.

Lilith traced a finger up and down Harry's cock which was twitching seemingly upset for all the talking and no shagging. "The fucking Twins just kept their eyes shut and grabbed my hair and just fucked my face. I might as well been a Muggle blow-up doll; I was a thing. You, on the other hand, seemed to look like you couldn't believe you were getting a blow-job. You didn't expect it like it was a right or something. You didn't act like you were Merlin's gift to witches. So no Harry, you are nothing, nothing at all like those other wizards."

Harry mulled this over before he noticed that Lilith's fingers were getting less teasing and more sexual in their caress of his cock. He looked up and found her watching him, need in her eyes.

"I had a Prince Charming come into my life and not only does he wine and dine me but saves my life as well. Shouldn't a guy like that get his reward?" Lilith asked.

"What do you have in mind?" Harry asked with a husky catch in his voice. After hearing Seamus and Dean always moaning how hard it was to get a witch to give it up, it was catching him off guard to see the look which left no hint that he was going to get brilliantly shagged. It felt like finding galleons on the ground just for the taking.

Lilith smiled, "I would like to do a little exploring Harry. As much as this is my first time, you sort of jumped over all the foreplay that would convince me to get naked. So I really haven't had a chance to check out the 'lay of the land' so to speak. Considering that I'm already naked in your bed just means you must be one of those bad boys Mother always warned me about!"

Harry chuckled at this as Lilith moved down next to him, her face close to his cock that she continued to fondle. She looked up to see him have a slight confused look on her face. "Oh come on Harry, unlike Sally-Anne I never had any confidence to have a boyfriend. Prior to today Sally-Anne was my only lover and the Twins were the only dicks I'd seen. I just sucked them off as fast as possible. I never got to really check out the equipment."

Harry watched as Lilith played with his balls and traced her fingers up and down his cock. He merely shrugged at her comment that she was surprised he had a circumcision scar. He had no idea how Magicals did the procedure. If it wasn't for the fact his relatives wouldn't spend a pound on him, he wouldn't put it past Aunt Petunia to have had it done later to make him more of a 'proper boy like her Duddykins' as she was wont to say.

During this time it dawned on Harry that while he had a lot of time to explore Katie Bell's body during their time together, one woman wasn't the model for them all. As Lilith was busy being fascinated by his erect penis, he started to reciprocate and caress her body, comparing her to Katie, Luna and Narcissa.

Lilith hummed happily to herself as Harry did this. He quickly realized that Lilith might not be as well proportioned as Katie, ethereally enticing as Luna or have the wanton, burning bound

sexuality of Narcissa but what she did have was wonderful skin. He marveled at how soft her skin was. It was like she had never grown out of the baby-smooth phase. So Harry was quite content to just run his hands over her till he could not ignore that Lilith had switched from exploring to actively jerking him off.

With a moan, Harry shifted onto his back as Lilith continued to steadily stroke him. "Is this good Harry? I'm not gripping too hard am I?" she asked.

"No...in fact you can grip me tighter. Old John Thomas is tougher than he looks!" Harry said which caused Lilith to giggle. She did, however, tighten her grip as she continued to wank him. She unconsciously dropped her other hand down to her sex and was surprised at how wet she was. She hadn't noticed how aroused she had become simply by exploring Harry's bits as he caressed her.

She looked up into Harry's face and was thrilled to see the look of need in his eyes. "So do you like this? A good change from having to yank your own crank, yes?" She asked mischievously.

"Oh bloody hell yes!" Harry exclaimed as Lilith followed up with a hard lick to the crown of his cock. This was obviously something he couldn't do by himself. Of course there was that comment Ron had made about limbering charms...Harry banished that thought before it fully formed.

Lilith leaned back and stepped up her tempo. She also rubbed the tip of his prick over her breasts which made her nipples harden to diamond points. "So they're not Katie Bell's tits but do you like? Do you want to cum on them? Did you want to see how pretty my tits are with your cum on them? I think you do, you bad boy!"

Harry felt his balls tingle with cum at the sight of Lilith rubbing his dick over her breasts. She didn't know it but it was almost exactly what Katie had done for him when she was trying to figure out what got him going. She was nailing it right down to the sexy talk.

"You tits are smashing Lilith and...uuhh...and if you keep that up...oh yeah I'm going to cum on them." Harry gasped out. He never understood how Seamus and Dean seemed to think they were in control when witches jerked or sucked them off. Right now he felt he'd almost agree to take the Dark Mark if only Lilith would continue.

His cock might as well been one of Dudley's Playstation game controllers for all the power Lilith had over him now.

Lilith was practically panting as she watched the play of emotions on Harry's face. She didn't like to admit it, considering how she felt she was an intellectual, but she had her stash of teen witch romance novels. Somehow, however, they had never fully conveyed anything like what she was seeing and feeling now. Harry's eye roamed over her breasts like he was a starving man looking at a sumptuous meal. She gloried in how a slight tug one way or another or just speeding up or slowing down her actions made Harry grunt or moan in a way which thrilled her to her core. She found that Harry's aura, while starting to really amplify everything, was like a movie score; background music to help the action but not the action itself.

Lilith's own sex gave a spasm of need and she realized she really wanted to watch Harry cum all over her. She felt a secret thrill since she had always felt it would be hot even though Sally-Anne had felt a bit degraded by it when she'd fill her in about her dates. Maybe because her friend thought it degrading made Lilith like it; now she was being the bad one mother's warned their sons about!

"Come on Harry, my tits are thirsty for your cum! Show me what you've been hiding in these big balls of yours! Splash them up good!" Lilith begged. She suddenly wanted another orgasm created by Harry cumming so she picked up the pace of her wanking.

Harry couldn't take it anymore and with a strangled, "Here it comes!" began to shoot his load. Through the haze of his orgasmic bliss, Harry was once again amazed at the sight before him. Even with this being his fifth orgasm of the day, he was spurting jet after jet of his seed onto Lilith's heaving breasts.

Lilith squealed in pleasure as she pumped more of his cum out of him as she orgasmed in tune with Harry's flashing aura. She directed it first to one breast and then the other. After about the fifth spurt of shimmering cum Lilith suddenly leaned down and sucked him greedily into her mouth which made Harry groan even more. He felt if he were a woman he would have orgasmed again right there. Even so he shot two more weak spurts into her mouth before finally being spent. After a moment where the teens did little else but wallow in coming down from their ecstatic high, both of them seem to look each other in the eye at the same time.

"Wow, Harry, you sure did a number on me!" Lilith beamed as she motioned to her breasts that were glistening with Harry's seed. "I always thought my tits were too big but you seem to like them just fine! Your cum is so hot!"

"It's why we Lions are the king of the jungle," Harry joked. He gave a long lustful look at her cum-soaked tits before making a quick, jerky gesture and Lilith found her breasts were clean. She would have marveled longer at this unconscious act of impressive magic on Harry's part but he had leaned in and captured a nipple in his mouth causing her to moan and focus on the magic he was making with his tongue.

After a bit of serious tongue lashing Harry looked up at Lilith, "I think your breasts are fine. You are only 16 and I'm sure you'll grow into them. Plus this is the first time I've heard a gal complain about her bust size being to big before!"

Lilith hummed a bit more as Harry moved his attention to her other nipple while bringing up a caressing finger to keep the previous nipple from becoming lonely. "Well Harry you don't have to have guys always checking out your chest all day."

"No, I just have gals 'accidentally' grabbing my arse, especially after Quidditch matches!" Harry murmured around a taunt nipple.

Lilith sighed, "Well you do have a smashing one Harry!"

"Just as you have a smashing set of tits, Lilith!" Harry responded jokingly.

Harry continued to suckle and caress Lilith's breasts before starting to roam over her skin, licking and kissing his way around her body. Lilith felt she should probably reciprocate since Harry's hardening cock was within easy reach but she found she could do little else but just enjoy the feelings he was creating in her.

As much as he enjoyed the feel of Lilith's taunt nipples in his mouth, he had left them to leaving kisses and licks all up and down her body. While not as toned as Katie, Lilith's skin made for wonderful exploring. He found it odd how much kissing and nuzzling up and down her legs was exciting to him. That Lilith liked it as well was not

in doubt as she continued to hum happily and give small encouragements when he'd find a sweet spot.

Finally the smell of her sex couldn't be resisted and Harry began to let his tongue roam up and down her wet slit. Lilith's hum of pleasure rapidly became moans as she fought not to take Harry's head in her hands and force him to where she needed him to be. She was amazed, however, how quickly it became apparent that Harry knew what he was doing. His teeth quickly and lightly captured her clit as his tongue gave it feather-light caresses. Lilith couldn't believe how good this felt, more so because Sally-Anne had told her that her boyfriends had never been able to find her 'magic button' without help.

As Harry's tongue alternated between her clit and roaming up and down her slit, he started to tease her opening with his fingers. After a few minutes of this Lilith couldn't take any more, "Please Harry, don't tease! If you are going to use your hand then you need to fuck me now!"

Harry looked up, her juices bright on his chin, "Well you said you were a virgin..."

Lilith's hips were practically bucking as she enticed him to fuck her, "Harry, we're not Muggles! Except for repressed girls like Hermione, almost no girl past Third Year has an intact hymen! Don't you think we girls don't fuck each other with toys to help each other get off? Now finger-fuck me!"

Harry filed the comment about Hermione away for future study and bent back to his pleasurable task. After his first bit of sex with Narcissa, he'd trimmed his nails prior to going out on their dinner date. So now he was more confident he wouldn't hurt Lilith as he began to steadily fuck her with two fingers as he went back to his tongue-lashing of the girl's sex.

Harry enjoyed making the young witch moan as he flicked his tongue this way and that over her clit but after a glance up at her he pulled back and replaced his tongue with the index finger of his other hand. As much as he loved the taste of a witch, Harry was entranced with the sight before him. Lilith's hips continued to meet the thrusts of his fingers as her hands were busying teasing her rock hard nipples. Her eyes were closed and her face, beautifully framed

by her chestnut brown hair, had an erotic look that went straight to his erect and straining prick.

Her look changed quickly as her cunt began to twitch and tighten around his fingers. Harry rose up a bit so he could look down upon her as she came. He was amazed at how forceful it was as her hands dropped to grab the bed-sheet as she seemed to lose control of her bucking hips. A bright red flush practically glowed in her chest as Lilith gave an unintelligible half-moan, half-shout as the orgasm crested through her.

Before Lilith could fully come down from her orgasm, Harry took his cock in his hand and roughly began to rub it up and down her hot slit, sometimes stopping to rub his crown against her engorged clit. While this felt brilliant to Harry, it caused Lilith too rapidly cum again. Again before she could do more than catch her breath, Harry took his cock and easily slipped into her wet sex.

Lilith felt fuller than she had ever felt before. How Sally-Anne with her strictly religious and repressed parents had ended up with her dildo collection was something Lilith had often wondered at. Certainly the dildo they had named "Big Frank" was bigger than Harry's penis but it somehow paled to the hot cock that was thrusting so deliciously into her.

She didn't care if they were making love or just fucking. The feelings that washed over her were unlike anything she dreamed possible. Even on good dates, Sally-Anne seemed to find something to bitch about so Lilith hadn't been expecting much when it came to sex. Harry, however, seemed like some elemental force who was above mere mortals. It was as if he had stepped out of those trashy romance novels she had read to escape her miserable life. That he was so unconscious of how wonderful he was just added to his allure and she wanted more.

Lilith reached up and pushed Harry off her. She just smiled at his confused look; his hard cock seemingly angry as it twitched and glinted in the light due to her juices. She grabbed an extra pillow and stuffed it under her bum. She gave her best 'come hither' look and was rewarded with Harry's look of comprehension. With a lustful moan, she gloried in the feeling as he re-entered her. The change in position allowed him to penetrate even deeper than he had before and both teens marveled at the feeling.

As Harry experimented with the new angle he dove into Lilith. He realized how this was practically his 'first time' even though he'd had shagged five times since Luna had come through his window. This, however, was the first time he had had the time to really take it slow. All the previous times had been lustful, need driven fucks where it seemed his inner passions could not be denied. Harry felt more in control and able to take his time and observe more of what he was doing. The pretty Badger beneath him made this all the more enjoyable.

Lilith let her hands roam up and down Harry's back and arse as he continued to fuck her in even, deep thrusts. Both tried to keep their eyes open and drink in the sight of the other in their passionate throes but too often the sexual feelings would spike and they would find themselves with their eyes closed, moaning at the sensations.

Harry began to feel the now familiar tight feeling in his balls and so he leaned in and huskily whispered into Lilith's ear, "Are your tits still thirsty? Or should I be that bad boy your mother warned you about and make you suck down my hot load?"

Lilith almost came at Harry's words. She hadn't liked it when there was 'dirty talk' in her romance novels because it came across as fake. Yet hearing it from Harry turned her on like nothing else. "Yes, I'll suck you off, you bad, bad boy!" Suddenly she wanted to taste his hot seed again and her hips began to buck with urgent need against him.

Harry wanted to draw out Lilith's first time but her urgent thrusts against him quickly sent him over the edge. He tried to stay in her as long as he dared before he started shooting because the feeling of her cunt spasming against his cock was unbelievable. However, Lilith was not to be denied and she grabbed his arse and guided his cock into her mouth, stroking him roughly. With a strangled cry, Harry began to come and he toppled onto the bed. Even as his aura sparked another orgasm on top of the one she had just had, Lilith artfully kept Harry's spurting cock in her mouth, hungrily swallowing his fiery load.

Harry felt like he had lost muscle control as he jerked as he came. He pumped about six spurts of his essence into Lilith's mouth before he was finally spent. She continued to suckle and pump his cock for

a bit before the sensation was far too much for Harry and he had to beg for her to stop.

Lilith marveled at how Harry's cum was not only hot but it seemed to...tingle in her mouth. This was a far cry from the bitter spunk she had to endure when she had sucked off the Terrible Twins. She already wished Harry could get it up again so she could suck more of it out of him. However his 'old John Thomas' seemed to finally be done for the day. It had shrunk so much that barely the crown was peeking out from his scrotum. Lilith felt a satisfied smile grow on her face; she had defeated the dreaded Basilisk and it had gone to whimper and cower in its lair! Take that Lions of Gryffindor! Lilith doubted that except for Katie, no other Gryffindor gal had tamed that particular dragon! Badger Pride!

Feeling triumphant at a brilliant first time worthy of the best movie or novel, Lilith was content to let Harry do more of his amazing wandless, non-vocal spells to clean them up and easily settled down to cuddle and lie her head on his chest. Soon she rolled over and grabbed her stuffy and sighed happily as Harry spooned against her. Neither heard Dobby popped in quietly after ten minutes or so. The house elf extinguished the lights after pulling up the covers over the contented lovers.

GRIMMAULD PLACE, LONDON – SEPTEMBER 28th 1996 – MORNING

Lilith gave a happy hum as she woke to kisses. If almost being killed by Death Eaters was the price to be paid for the admission to the ride that was Harry's life, she'd be first in line!

"Hey there sleepy-head, Dobby just popped in to tell us Winky will have breakfast ready in a bit." Harry said as Lilith stretched with a big smile on her face. Again Harry was struck by how love and lust could transform how a witch looked. He had never really given Lilith much more than a covert glance at her chest when they had had classes together. With so many beauties like the Patils, Daphne or Lavender, gals like Lilith were often overlooked. Harry felt guilty when he realized how he'd probably wouldn't have given Hermione a second glance if she had been sorted into Ravenclaw and hadn't become the friend she had been to him.

"So what's the plan, you bad, bad boy? Going to shag me rotten before brekke?" Lilith murmured huskily.

Harry gave a sad smile, "Unfortunately I'm going to be a good little Lordling and just get us ready for when the aurors come later to take our pensieve readings."

Lilith sighed but still smiled, "I was afraid you'd say that. I guess this is where I say, 'Curses! Foiled again!'"

Harry returned the grin, "Or you could be like Malfoy and tell me how your father will hear about it!" Both teens laughed at that thought. Lilith was surprised how the comment hadn't upset her considering her father had so recently died with her mother in the car crash. Maybe she was finally working through her own grief.

Lilith didn't want to leave her time in bed with Harry just yet. So she started to play with his new long hair. It was time for a distraction! "I must say Harry; you sure know how to show a girl a...interesting time. I do hope, however, we can forego the Death Eater attack next time we go to dinner."

Harry rolled his eyes, "No promises. Padma once joked I must have been somebody like Hitler in a previous life because of all the crap I have to put up with in this life. She said my Karmic debt must be huge."

Lilith chuckled, "I don't think you've got Hitler's soul in you Harry...Stalin or Grindelwald maybe, but not Hitler."

Harry started to make a grab for a pillow to hit her with but that would have interrupted her playing with his hair. He found having someone else play with one's hair was even more fun than doing it like he had in the shower the night before.

Lilith stopped chuckling and looked thoughtful. This look gave way to one of intense concentration, so much so that her hand slowly stopped stroking Harry's hair. Harry just watched her for a bit before finally asking, "Lilith? Earth to Lilith?"

Lilith blinked and gave an embarrassed smile, "Sorry, Harry, I was having a Ravenclaw moment as Megan and Hannah would say. The comment about Hitler got me thinking about Judaism. I was raised

as a Jew and it is because of their lore I got the idea for the line of research I had wanted to get into. I just now made a connection to something I've been looking at in my spare time."

Harry couldn't help but kid her a bit, "Research on your time off? Are you sure you aren't Hermione using Polyjuice potions to get into my pants?"

Lilith stuck her tongue out at him, "Why is it we Badgers can't be interested in learning without people assuming we were mis-sorted? I'm sure Hermione must be as tired of being asked why she isn't in Ravenclaw as I am."

Before Harry could respond she reached down and caught his flaccid cock in her fingers although it rapidly began to grow. "Anyway it was this wonderful appendage that got me thinking. How many times to you have sex yesterday? Actually, how many times did you cum?"

Harry was caught off guard about how his dick had anything to do with Hitler and Jews but he answered anyway, "Well in the last 48 hours I've had sex six times but I've cum ten times." Harry paused to double-check this, "Yeah, I came four times the day before and then six more times yesterday."

Lilith nodded, "And yet last night on your ninth orgasm you practically coated my tits like you hadn't cum in weeks. Even though I didn't see it, your tenth time was easily three times the load that either Fred or George had done and one of them had said they hadn't gotten any recently so I know they had some backlog built up."

Harry nodded, "I've been wondering about that. Each time I cum it is like it is the first time. I just thought maybe it was a wizard thing. So what does this have to do with Hitler and Judaism?"

Lilith chuckled, "It has nothing to do with Hitler but it may have a link to Judaism. Tell me Harry, what do you know about my namesake?"

Harry mulled this over before responding, "Isn't Lilith the Queen of the Succubae? I must say you were justly named with that amazing mouth of yours!"

Lilith laughed happily at the compliment. "That is how Christians see Lilith but to the Jews she was the First Woman. A lot of Jews see that God is neither male nor female but both and when He fashioned humans in "his" image, He split them into male and female. Both were 'equal' in that they represented half of the Almighty. Lilith was thus the first wife of Adam. However she refused to be subservient to him and so she left. This is why Eve was created out of Adam's rib and so was more pliant."

"Considering how many men are right bastards, I'm not surprised Lilith took off," Harry muttered darkly.

"Exactly! She had refused to 'lie under him' or something like that. Pretty much she refused to be just his sex toy. I remember how I laughed that one of her crimes was that she wanted to be on top sometimes during sex!" Lilith said, chuckling at the memory of her Rabbi's face when she had chortled at hearing of this.

"How this might affect you, Harry, is Lilith supposedly went off and mated with the Archangel Samuel and from this union were born the Lilin, children who shared many traits Lilith supposed had such as shape-changing and speaking with serpents." Lilith explained.

Seeing Harry's surprised look she hurried on before he could interrupt. "Look Harry, if you look at legends, mythology and 'fairy tales' and marry those up with what we Magicals know, a pattern emerges...a pattern you can see if you know some science."

Lilith cupped Harry's balls, "Right now these beauties are busy producing billions of sperm. That's what you men do every day. You are creating half of what is needed to make a baby. Now if you know anything about science, genetics and evolution then you know that any advantage an organism has over its competitors will rapidly allow it to expand and dominate its niche in the over-all ecosphere. You tracking?"

Harry nodded, "Yeah, I spend a lot of time in the library when I'm stuck with my relatives during the summer. I think I know sort of where you're going with this. We Magicals can do so much more than Muggles and yet there are billions of them and so few of us when it should be the other way around."

Lilith gave a happy smile; it was rare she could talk about her research with someone who had the Magical and Muggle background to understand it. "That is correct. So I started thinking about how few Magical families had a lot of kids. Plus, why aren't more magical animals dominant? I mean except for other magical creatures, what animal could stand up to a dragon?"

Harry pondered that for it made a lot of sense. After going up against a Hungarian Horntail, he couldn't see any predator up to and including dinosaurs beating one of them. "I take it you have a theory?"

"I do and it relates to you a bit. It doesn't get a lot of 'press' so to speak but the truth is the Wizarding world knows that at one time our Earth was connected to other planes of existence and in certain cases still are although it is really hard to get to and from those places. Places like Atlantis and Avalon weren't laid waste as most Muggles seem to think. They just 'phased' back into what ever adjacent plane they were originally from."

Lilith paused to gather her thoughts, "Do you know what Yggdrasil is Harry?"

"It's the Tree of Life and it binds the Nine Worlds of Norse myth together, right?" Harry said.

"Yes and I think it is just a metaphor just explains how at one point travel between different planes was easier. Ever notice how so many Magical races are tied to an old Muggle religion? I mean you look at the Norse tradition and you find giants, elves, goblins and dragons. All of those pagan religions are filled with them. I believe it is because back then those creatures were more common, common enough that Muggles knew of them."

"What happened do you think?" Harry asked.

"I think something happened that changed how Earth related to those other planes. It could be something cosmological or just some change inherent to the Earth. Why do we have a massive extinction every 250,000 years? Does the Earth pass through some sort of radiation belt as our galaxy is rotating? Is there some internal cycle in the Earth that tends to manifest to that number of years? Who knows? However I'm thinking that somehow, a few thousand

years ago the bridge between our reality and those others became impossible without some serious magical work." Lilith said.

Lilith looked Harry in the eyes with a piercing look, "You know Luna Lovegood, right? She comes from a long line of Seers and those with that gift are often called 'fey' like the fairy folk. Well their land of Avalon can still be reached if you know how to do the ritual. It is difficult and made even more so because time runs differently. I think a year there is like four or five some years here or something like that. My point is at one time travel between the worlds was easy and animals and sentient races could go back and forth. However, those otherworldly creatures are not native to our dimension. So when the shift happened, they were trapped here."

A light went on in Harry's brain, "I get it! You're saying that creatures such as Dragons and Hippogriffs are not natural to Earth and so they...they what...they have a hard time breeding?"

Lilith nodded, "That's my theory. While a Magical animal is nasty, between accidents and perhaps their young sometimes being killed off, over time their numbers would dwindle."

Harry saw the sense in that. "So what about us Magicals?"

Lilith gave a mournful sigh, "Well this is the part I want to research but already I've run up against a lot of bigotry for just even bringing it up. We have billions of Muggles on the planet and only a few Magicals. Why are we different? Since we don't breed quickly, it makes one ask are we like those other magical creatures? How did humans gain magic?"

Harry for some reason thought of Hagrid and gave a gasp. "You think the only reason wizards and witches exist is because Muggles interbred with other magical beings! That's how we got our magical cores!" Harry could see why so many in the Magical world would not like that implication, the Purebloods especially.

"Yes, that is my theory and there is lots of circumstantial evidence to back it up. Now there are many other worldly creatures that are very human like. Obviously magic somehow trumps genetics to allow human cross-breeds to even exist. Mythology is filled with stories of gods, demons and angels have children with normal humans.

Perhaps Hercules, if he actually existed, was actually just a half-giant like Hagrid."

"Getting back to Lilith, from what I've been able to find, she was probably a queen of a group of otherworldly beings that are usually called demons. I like to use that term although I use it personally in the sense of being from a different dimension and not being Hellish. Anyway, Lilith is a Succubus which, as I said, are shape-shifters and could speak with serpents. Succubae are just one 'humanoid' race. There are the Vanir, the elves most people raised on Tolkien would think of. We don't have any in Britain, but there are Dwarves on the Continent and obviously Flitwick is an example of a Goblin-Human mix."

Harry had to ask, "Yeah what's up with that?"

Lilith gave a laugh, "I wondered about that too, Harry. Actually it was Hagrid that got me wondering just from a 'mechanics' sort of way. I mean how did his parents make it work? I found out that about a hundred years ago a clandestine organization was formed to either 'save' certain races like giants or to work with races like Goblins to give them access to our magics.

The reason Goblins don't use wands and need wizards is because they don't have the same magical cores as we do. However if enough goblins and humans genes mixed, then they could and Professor Flitwick is an example of that. Likewise it was felt if humans bred with giants, they could hopefully temper their rage and xenophobia of other races. Sadly this group was mostly destroyed. It is probably why Flitwick and Hagrid work at Hogwarts considering most people consider them an abomination."

Harry thought of the human looking Veela and could see why people would be tempted to mate with a non-human. "So you think I am a limited metamorphagus and a Parselmouth because I've got Succubae blood in me?"

Lilith shrugged, "I'm saying it is a possible explanation. Look with enough study; many Magicals if they really worked at it could become animagi. The reality is that most just can't seem to make it work. Perhaps it is less about magic and more about the blood. That you were able to spontaneously become an animagus seems to imply you have more of that blood. This brings us back to your

wonderful, wonderful cock." She said giving said member a playful tug.

"Harry, do me a favor and grab your wand," Lilith asked. She watched as Harry merely squinted and his wand flew into his hand. "Okay I need you to conjure a Patronus mist and not the actual full form."

Harry was surprised by the request but complied. Yet almost from the moment the mist emerged from his wand he suddenly realized where she was going with her reasoning. As the mist hovered in the air, Harry could immediately see the same shimmering silver glint in the mist that he had seen in his own semen.

Lilith pointed, "See Harry? Succubae are also renowned for their sexual prowess and stamina. You aren't just shooting semen Harry, you are cumming actual magic. I would bet that if you hadn't banished the cum off my tits so quickly we would have found that most of it would have actually vanished in time. It also explains why your cum is so hot and tasty; it is a manifestation of your magic. Like your aura, it is practically designed to please us witches."

Harry banished the Patronus mist. "This is incredible Lilith! Why hasn't anyone else done rese...no forget I asked. Considering a lot of the crap Muggleborns get, I can see why you've had problems finding info." Harry thought about the possibilities. Being a vengeful avatar of Nemesis was one thing but from what Lilith seemed to be saying is that without some work, Magicals would eventually die out.

An idea struck Harry, "What about out-crossing between Magicals? I mean it is bad enough the Purebloods all marry each other but most UK Magicals breed here. Do you think there would be a benefit to Magicals marrying from outside their area?"

Lilith nodded, "I think so. For some reason different parts of the planet open up to different planes. Now many mythological creatures that seem different really aren't but it is true that people like the Patils, Su Li and Cho Chang might have blood from different non-humans in their genes. Breeding with them should, in theory, result in strong magical children."

Harry was struck at how the insular nature of the Magical world, especially now with the need to keep hidden from the Muggles, was

creating an environment which might doom them all. "Damn Lilith, this is important! I think this needs to be looked at right now." Harry stopped for a moment and now it was his turn for his face to take on an intense look of concentration.

Lilith waited patiently for Harry to go on. She wasn't sure where his thoughts were leading him but internally she was praying as she had never prayed before. She felt like what a scientist about to learn whether they got a research grant or not might feel.

Harry suddenly looked up and his green eyes pierced her again, causing her to almost gasp. "Look Lilith, how would you like to be hired by a research company I'll found? I'm thinking I can hire lots of people. However before they can be of use, they need to get schooling. So I'll pay for them to continue their education at Hogwarts. Does that sound like something you'd be interested in?"

Lilith gave a happy shout and hugged Harry tightly, smothering him with kisses, "Oh Harry do you mean it? Would you bring back all the Muggleborns that had to drop?"

Harry nodded, a slightly goofy smile on his face, "Why not? I found out recently the Fund which made it possible for you to go to school was created by House Potter. My ancestral House may currently be a gutted shell of what it was, but that doesn't mean I can't start plans to change that. I figure if I create a company, I can hopefully hide what I'm doing from who ever destroyed my House."

"Later, we can get ask some of the students if they would like to actually stay on with the company. I figure we'd have to get them all trained up in Muggle sciences like biology so you could start actually testing your theories." Harry said.

Lilith wondered if the death curse from the previous day had actually killed her because right now she felt she must be in Heaven as all of her dreams were coming true. Of course she doubted Harry would fall down on his knees and ask to make her his wife but she always had a feeling about Harry; he had a larger destiny about him...the poor bloke.

A thought struck Lilith, "What about Sally-Anne? She's had her baby by now. Do they allow babies at Hogwarts?"

Harry nodded, "Actually they do and I found out all about it when I was learning about what Heads of Houses are allowed at Hogwarts. Apparently back in the day it was practically expected for witches to 'prove' their fertility prior to an actual marriage so Hogwarts actually has rooms and a fifth House whose symbol is a hare to accommodate students with babies; So Sally-Anne can go back to Hogwarts if she wants too."

Lilith hugged Harry again, "Oh Harry you don't know it but you've made at least one witch very, very happy! Sally-Anne will be thrilled! Plus not to sound mercenary but you probably bought yourself the loyalty of a whole group of Muggleborns!"

Harry seemed to tense and grow cold in her arms. The happy vibe had been radiating ever since they had been in the shower the night before seem to darken and despite the warmth of the room, Lilith shivered.

Harry said softly, "Loyalty is not something that can be bought, Lilith. It must be earned. Too often it has to be bought in blood and suffering." Harry looked at her and again Lilith could not help but again feel like a mouse gazing at the cobra about to strike. "Lilith, I've had a wonderful time with you and if you want to continue to see each other...well I'd like that."

Harry suddenly stood up and walked over to the window and looked down on where they had almost been killed the night before. Harry turned back to her and gestured towards the window, "What happened last night is my life, Lilith. I don't get to be like other guys. In fact last night was a gift of the likes that I doubt you could understand. Last night I could pretend I'm just like any bloke. That feeling, if only for a few hours, is so precious to me I'd give up all my galleons for a day of that feeling."

Lilith held her breath. Suddenly this wasn't Harry anymore. Where last night he had been Prince Charming, now he seemed almost like something out of Shakespeare; a tragic character with a doleful mission.

"Lilith, you were right last night. I can't let the attack last night give me an excuse to push people away. I'm not the only one who has had their life torn apart by Voldemort and other evil elements running around in Magical Britain. However, I have a dark and

dangerous road ahead of me. I'm telling you know in all seriousness, if you take my hand and say you'll walk that dark road along side me, I will accept you. We have fought together and loved together and I think you have proven your heart is good."

Harry closed the gap between them and looked down on her, somehow seeming to tower over the bed. "Yet before you take my hand you must know I'm marked for great things, dark and terrible things I've been told. What I must do to right wrongs such as what happened to Sally-Anne won't be for the faint hearted. If you throw your lot in with me, you must accept that I reject the meaningless conventions of the Dark and Light. I'm here to bring back balance and enact vengeance. Remember what happened last night; that is that path I must walk."

Lilith shivered again but she wasn't a Hufflepuff for nothing! There was a bravery in the loyalty of the Badgers that the Lions would never, could never understand. Lilith rose up from the bed; the sunlight coming through the window seemed to cast her body in an ethereal glow. She reached out and took Harry's hand.

"I understand, Ha...Lord Black and if you will have me, I will be your woman. I will follow you, no matter how dark the road." Unbidden some stories about noted Hufflepuffs from history came up from her memory, Professor Sprout's voice ringing with pride as she told them. "We Badgers may not be known for bravery but it is we who stay with the sinking ship; it is those of Hufflepuff who stay at their posts till the end, never forgetting their oaths or their call of duty."

Harry covered Lilith's hand with his left, clasping it to his chest, "Then Lilith Moon, I do take you as one of my women. I shall strive to remain worthy of your loyalty and may you help me navigate through the dark path I must go." Harry leaned forward and kissed Lilith. The kiss deepened and there was a flash as their auras meshed and bonded.

XxXxX

Harry came down stairs to find Narcissa looking over some papers. On seeing the pair she brightened. "Ah, I was about to send Dobby up to remind you about breakfast. Winky has it all ready."

Harry motioned to the papers, "So what do you have there, Narcissa?"

"I'm trying to assess what still constitutes the Black holdings. With Sirius being in prison for much of the time he was Head of House Black and then still a wanted criminal I was thinking that whoever attacked House Potter might have taken a stab at House Black. So far everything I remember being owned by the various Black branches is intact. I half expect the manor I grew up in to have been taken considering my mother is in long term-care at St. Mungo's."

Harry was surprised at this, "Wait a tic; you're not that old Cissy, so what happened to your mum?"

Narcissa shrugged, "My mother is a Rosier, one of those allies of the Malfoys if you remember. Her views on anything modern, Muggle or Magical could be termed suspicious at best and paranoid at worst. She picked up some a strain of Ebola while visiting in Africa and refused to take any Muggle medicine or some of the newer Magical potions for it. She claimed the Rosiers had been brewing potions for generations and didn't need any 'new-fangled' potions brewed by half-breeds and Muggle-lovers. So now she's in a room two doors down from the Longbottoms because the disease has destroyed a great deal of her higher brain functions."

Lilith gave a gasp at this and Harry said softly, "I'm sorry Narcissa, I didn't mean..."

"Don't be sorry, my lord, because you shouldn't be. My mother was a narrow-minded bigot of the first order and I think she had a lot to do with working with Lucius to fill Draco's head up with nonsense. She spent the last two decades before her illness hating me because of the moves I had Lucius make which brought in galleons by working and investing in Muggle enterprises. She quite publically announced how she was ashamed that I was of her flesh. She even went so far as to say that at least Andromeda, a daughter she had disinherited was a better daughter than I because while she had married a Muggleborn, at least she didn't stoop to making 'dirty money' from the Muggles."

"So...you'd wear red to her funeral and bring a date?" Harry asked cautiously.

Narcissa got a blank look on her face and just stared at him till he couldn't help but have his lips twitch a bit. She then burst out laughing and Harry joined in leaving Lilith a bit confused.

"Thank you Harry; it is rare that I can laugh at anything relating to my mother. Anyway, the House is still part of the Black properties. I was thinking, if you agree, that perhaps Andromeda could be allowed to move in if you do indeed go through and cancel her being disinherited." Narcissa said.

Harry shrugged, "Sounds good to me but where are you going to stay?"

Narcissa looked like she either wanted to roll her eyes or sigh, "Harry, you are now my lord and without your protection I doubt I'd last a day on the outside. If the Dark Lord and the Death Eaters don't kill me, I'd probably be 'disappeared' by the Ministry or even the Order of the Phoenix to get at what I know. Right now you are my only hope for anything resembling a life. Besides I told old prune-faced McGonagall I was acting as your personal secretary and frankly it is something you need. Since you intend to resume your education, you need someone like me to run things for you and plan things."

Lilith wasn't sure she liked the sound of that. "How do you expect Harry to trust you with all that? You were wife to a Death Eater and Draco might as well be one!"

Harry laid a hand on Lilith's shoulder, "Its okay Lilith. Actually I do trust her because she's right; I'm her only hope. In fact, the situation makes her even more trustworthy because the more useful she is to me the better chance I won't chuck her out in the street. Besides, from things people have said about you, you've always been the power behind Lucius so now instead of just House Malfoy, you have access to two Houses plus what ever is left of House Potter. Am I right, Cissy?"

Narcissa wanted to lie but she knew with Harry's powers it was possible he was a legimens as well. He seemed like he could do practically everything else. "I must admit, my lord, that the opportunity your new power has is...enticing and I would be lying to say I'm not excited at the prospect of using it. However I doubt you would be as stupid as Lucius and not notice I was using you."

Harry nodded, "I have plans for Britain, Cissy and as long as those plans go forward, I'm perfectly willing to let you play your political games. I need to get revenge for my ancestors and I need to protect House Black. Plus the magics of House Peverell seem...eager to be used. Like I told Director Bones, a storm is coming and I am that storm. From things you've dropped I think many of the enemies that I want crushed will make you very pleased."

Narcissa felt a twinge in her sex and the hard look in Harry's eyes. It was amazing how he could just be a cute, adorable teen any mother would be proud of (and mothers of daughter's would fear) and then he'd change into something a little less than human and more of an elemental force in human form. He would radiate power and that power acted on her like an aphrodisiac. This reminded her of the potential to act on her sudden lusts.

"Oh Harry before we sit down for breakfast I found something that you will need before going back to Hogwarts." Narcissa pointed to a golden laughing Buddha on the table. "My father borrowed this when Bellatrix went through a rough patch when she was nine. She was ending up having a lot of bouts of accidental magic and it was causing problems. I remember my uncle telling me how his great-grandfather had won it playing a game of Go in the Orient. With a tap of a wand and the incantation, 'संयम' which is Hindi for moderation, this little Buddha will mute magical auras. Even though I was three rooms down, I still felt enough of your lovemaking last night that I needed to...well I felt it." Narcissa said, surprising herself at blushing. Lilith was blushing madly as well.

"This is brilliant, Cissy!" Harry said happily. "I was worried about causing some sexual riot every time I wanted to spend time with a pretty witch." Harry's wink caused Lilith to blush even more.

Narcissa gave a slight bow, "I wouldn't be much of a personal secretary if I didn't anticipate your needs. There is, however, one small issue which needs to be addressed and that is its range. Accidental magic from a nine year old is one thing but your aura, my lord, is a monster."

Harry was a bit confused, "Range, what do you mean?"

Lilith suddenly gave a nasty laugh, "Oh Harry, after all that wonderful insights you had upstairs I can't believe you can't see what's going on here." She grinned at the venomous look Narcissa gave her. "She wants you to shag her so we can test how well the moderating Buddha works. I'm sure even with it people close to you will still feel it so we need to see how far away before no one can tell anything is up."

Harry felt his cock rapidly stiffening in his pants. Perhaps Lilith was right and he had Succubae (Inccubae?) blood in him since he seemed ready for sex at the drop of a hat. Maybe he was just now acting like a normal teen male now that his magic was unbound. What ever the reason, having sex with Cissy on the kitchen table seemed like fun to him.

"Already up to your old tricks and manipulations, eh Narcissa?" Harry said with forced menace in his voice. "I think we discussed yesterday what would happen to you if you crossed me."

Narcissa paled, "No my lord! It wasn't like that! Don't let this witch put lies into my mouth! Yes we need to test it but it just needs to be done prior to your return to Hogwarts!" For some reason while the power bleeding off Harry excited her, the look in her eyes also made her heart race in fear.

Harry turned his head away from Narcissa, "Lilith, remember what I said upstairs? Well there are things...dark things that I just have to do." Lilith almost gulped at Harry's tone...until he winked at her. Suddenly she realized Harry was going to do some play acting. Her own sex started to tingle; this was going to be good.

With a gesture the Buddha came flying into Harry's hand. He tapped it with his wand and said the incantation. "So, Narcissa, what is the expected range of this? Or did you intend to lie about that as well so you could hang around and get off while I'm having my time with the ladies?"

Narcissa couldn't help but come out of her chair and started to back up. The primal part of her brain was screaming for her to flee but she also felt to move to quickly might provoke an attack. Suddenly it was like she was seeing him in his Grim form. "I...I'm not sure...I...3 to 4 meters I think! Please! I didn't..." she practically screamed.

Harry gestured and the sleeping robe Narcissa was wearing practically disintegrated revealing Narcissa's beautiful nude body. Lilith eye's widened at the sight. She'd seen some pretty girls in the showers at Hogwarts but they had all still been girls. Seeing what a fully proportioned woman in full bloom took her breath away. She actually felt surprised Harry had slept with her the night before when he could have been bedding this stunning woman!

Harry's magic forced Narcissa to her knees and Harry floated the Buddha to the table. "Lilith could you pace off the distance? I think from here to the door is five meters. While I punish my traitorous snake here, I would ask if you could move up and back and tell me what you feel."

Lilith nodded and paced off the distance as Harry had asked. The intense feeling of sexual desire Harry broadcasted dropped off about little over 3 meters leaving only a vague feeling of happiness. "Right about here Harry!" she said as she turned to see Narcissa's head bobbing up on Harry's cock; his pants around his ankles.

Lilith grabbed a chair and hurriedly sat. Her hands quickly found their way into her knickers and into her robes. Just because she wouldn't be able to feel Harry's 'power orgasm pulse' didn't mean she wasn't going to enjoy the erotic show in front of her.

She watched as Narcissa sucked Harry off as if her life depended on it. If she had been surprised (and turned on) by Harry's dirty talk last night, she found his 'evil master' routine even more arousing. She could tell by the erect nipples that Narcissa was powerfully aroused as well and she could even smell the woman's sex from where she sat. As Lilith fingered herself, she found herself wondering how she tasted.

Harry kept his evil smile on his face as he strove to stay in character. Narcissa had done great work the night before and whether she knew it or not, this was part of her reward. He might know what turned her own better than herself considering what he had seen in her mind the day before. So he tried to be one with his inner Dark Lord to feed her kink.

"For such a smart woman, you obviously need to be schooled again on the rules. Do I need to spank you? Tie you up and have you

beaten? A dirty, dirty girl like you probably would enjoy that. I may have to put a golden collar around your neck and keep you chained to my chair so you can pleasure me while I do my schoolwork."

Harry reached down and took her head in his hands, forcing her to drop his penis out of her mouth and look up at him. "Perhaps now that I'm a Grim like Sirius we should keep to the dog motif. I'll get you a pretty collar and a bell and have you eat out of a bowl. I can get you a shiny silver tag that reads 'Cissy Black' so everyone knows whose bitch you are."

Narcissa gasped at the humiliation Harry's words implied. The shame of Harry's friends coming into his suites and see her with a dog collar and chain, having to lap water out of a bowl like an animal. She wasn't sure if she was excited, aroused or appalled or all three at once. Worse was the thought that if Harry thought she was his bitch he might punish her by...no he'd never do that to her! He couldn't conceive of abusing his animagus form that way.

The last thought was so 'loud' to Harry it might as well be practically shouted. Harry gave a shudder. Fucking with Narcissa was one thing but if she was worried he'd shag her in his animagus form then he needed to tone it down. Luckily Lilith saved him from figuring out how.

"Harry just fucking shag her already! I want you to cum on her and cum good so we can see what happens after a bit." Lilith practically begged. She really wanted to see Harry fuck the raven-haired beauty.

Harry's magic lifted Narcissa up onto the table. He leaned in and hissed into her ear, "Such a Slytherin, somehow you manage to slither out of punishment just like your ex. Well here is one snake you can't escape." With that Harry thrust into her and began to roughly fuck her.

Narcissa gave a loud moan and to her own shame came within seconds to Harry's rough handling of her. She cried out in pleasure as he reached out and tweaked her nipples so much harder than he had done the day before. His aura, earlier so filled with menace, was now beating down on her with almost a primal lust.

Inside Harry there was a minor war was going on. It was a war Harry was actually enjoying watching. Ever since Harry had ordered his mind, the part of him that was Riddle hadn't really felt like a separate entity. However he had noticed during sex that the parts of Riddle inside him was revolted at the act. It was the few times it felt to Harry that he had an actual other entity trapped in him.

However Harry now realized it wasn't what he had first thought. It was as if Riddle was at war with Voldemort. There was a part the Dark Lord's soul that was mortified and disgusted at the hard fucking Harry was doing to Narcissa. This part of the essence was disgusted at the sight of Lilith frigging herself with abandon. However the greater part, a part which reminded Harry of the Tom Riddle that had come out of the diary, was fascinated by what was going on. If the Riddle essence was disgusted it was how the Voldemort part was reacting.

While all this was going on, Harry, was not only was reveling in the feeling of power he had over Narcissa but also of the power he had over his arch-rival. Here he was causing the Dark Lord to totally loss it simply by fucking a beautiful witch!

It was telling that the part of his soul that really created Voldemort out of Tom Riddle seemed to resent that very fact! The smaller (and weaker) part which acted more like Voldemort raged at being bound to Harry and having to feel his 'animal' acts. All of this Harry filed away for future schemes. So for every twinge from Voldemort just made Harry redouble his efforts which seemed to intensify the sexual feeling. Narcissa responded to this by writhing on the table in an unbridled picture of lust. She seemed to be in the throes of one long orgasm.

Harry found however the downside to this was in almost no time his balls tightened and he knew he was going to cum. He heard Lilith gasp as her own orgasm crested. This sound pushed him over the edge and he pulled out. Quick as a whip Narcissa reached out and caught his cock and started to jerk him off. A bellow welled up out of him and he couldn't help but have his head roll back as he cried out.

Lilith was amazed at the sight before her. As Harry cried out, Narcissa was milking his cock which began spurting. The first spurt flew out and covered Narcissa's face. The woman jerked the next few spasms onto her tits and the last few onto her stomach. By the

time Harry's cock finally stopped, she had certainly had made a mess of herself. Her body was coated with the silvery shimmering semen Lilith had seen the night before. It practically glowed on her body.

Harry tried to get his breathing under control as he watched Narcissa take her fingers and start to scoop up the cum from her face. He was surprised when Lilith quickly came over and began to actually lick some of the cum off the older woman's face. Soon they were kissing passionately. Then the pair were finger-fucking each other as they kissed. Harry was amazed at how in just a few minutes the two witches had managed to bring themselves off to another amazing set of orgasms.

After Lilith broke away from snogging Narcissa, the older witch looked up at Harry, "So could you be a gentleman and clean up after yourself?" She gestured to the shimmering cum that still shown on her belly and breasts.

Harry shook his head, "Sorry Cissy but we're actually conducting a bit of a science experiment. You see we want to..." Harry stopped as his seed began to fade. Within a matter of seconds there was little left but traces of an off-white residue. Lilith leaned down and licked it off Narcissa breasts causing Narcissa to beg her not to tease her so.

Lilith looked at Harry, "Okay now that tastes a bit more like what I remember the Twins tasting like. Still better but not like that brilliant tonic your cum normally is."

Narcissa looked confused. "What is going on here? What just happened?"

Harry laughed, "Well tell you in a second. I just looked at the time and I think we need to hustle up and take a shower so we can get some food in before the aurors arrive. I know Director Bones wanted us to be well rested but I'd rather not have them show up with us smelling like we just came from an orgy!"

Narcissa rose up and sighed, "As you will my lord...however perhaps in the interest of time we should all shower together?"

Harry and Lilith exchanged glances at the older woman's transparent ploy for more sex. Harry grinned at the eager look in the younger witch's eye.

Harry called out, "Dobby!"

The house-elf popped up almost instantly, "Youz be callin' me, Lordz Black?"

"Yes Dobby, I just want you to ask Winky to delay breakfast a bit and if the aurors show up, apologize for our tardiness and seat them in the sitting room."

Harry turned to the two witches, "Come, let us make sure we are well scrubbed for our guests!"

Harry couldn't help but laugh at how quickly both witches practically ran up the stairs. The shower had been nice enough with Lilith the night before. The idea of both of them was enough that Harry found himself practically bolting up the stairs after them in anticipation.

Winky popped out of the kitchen, 'Wherez be the Master and Missuses? They be missing breakfast!"

Dobby seemed to peer through the ceiling, "I be thinking Lordz Black will be late to breakfast."

Winky huffed and popped back to the kitchen leaving Dobby stroking his chin in thought.

"Dobby be havin' to grow Lordz Black shower. It bez a busy place!"

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A/N: Sorry this is late. I'm still looking for some Win-XP disks to fix "Godzilla" my old laptop and then "Bambi" my wife's notebook went down with a bad keyboard. Since my wife's writings take precedence over mine, I got bumped. Such are the trials of my life. So if anyone out there wants to ensure I write more, hook me up with some Win-XP disks. I just need to be able to boot my system up, double-check to see if there is anything I need to save and then I need to do a much, much, much delayed wipe and reload.

Barely Beta: Again I'm posting this in the interest of satisfying everyone's asking me to update soon. I expect there to be a lot of errors. If you find some doozies send me an email via my profile. I find I'm still correcting errors or making minor tweaks all the way back to Chapter One.

I Watched Thee: Taken from the title of a poem by Lord Byron Shelly. Mostly for the last stanza which sums up Lilith in regard to Harry:

Thus much and more, and yet thou lov'st me not,

And never wilt, Love dwells not in our will

Nor can I blame thee, though it be my lot

To strongly, wrongly, vainly, love thee still.

Of course Harry's considering how he grew up, Harry does have an amazing capability to love so maybe Lilith is just shooting herself in the heart to forestall the inevitable break-up she sees coming. Silly girl! Give Harry a chance...that is before the author does something nasty to him!

God Is In The Rain: Any soldier or serious camper will tell you of the religious nature of a shower. I think after an eleven day stint in the humidity of June in Germany, I became a convert to Water when we finally were able to leave down-range and hit the showers back at Hohenfels. The same could be said after six day in the middle of Louisiana during the hottest summer since 1933. They say there are no atheists in a foxhole; the same could be said of the shower after a week or two down-range.

Ted-Ted Cameo: A fine bear who has given my wife comfort over many a year. It is funny how many adults still use stuffies or pillows acting as one to sleep with. I was shocked how many soldiers (male ones!) who had stuffed animals when going overseas. They all said their girlfriends, wives or kids had gifted them to them. I wondered how many slept with them. Is it wrong to admit that after being in a committed relationship that one gets use to sleeping with something to hold onto?

House Elf Speak: Yes, I just realized I'm having them speak like LOLcats. Mea Culpa.

CHAPTER TEN – COLENDO FIDEM SANGUINI

CAVE, LITTLE HAGLETON - SEPTEMBER 28th 1996 – MID-AFTERNOON

Voldemort sat back thoughtfully as Avery bottled up the last of the memories they had both been reviewing from the three survivors of the previous night's debacle. Voldemort struggled with many emotions. Anger was the foremost because the Dark Lord had to admit that Pettigrew had preformed very well and the trap should have worked brilliantly. Worse, if that idiot Flint had not acted stupidly, the Potter boy might have even been captured!

Puzzlement was a close second of how Voldemort was feeling as he watched Avery motion for one of the newer Death Eaters to have the pensieve taken away. In reviewing the fight Voldemort had been shocked at the enormous power Potter had shown as well as the diversity of the spells he had cast. None of his spies, especially Severus had ever gotten a hint that Potter had gotten special training.

The only explanation that made sense was Sirius Black had opened up the Black library to the boy who had practiced those spells during his time with the so called "Dumbledore's Army" the previous year. However even this didn't fit the facts since the boy hadn't cast anything like those spells during the fight at the Ministry in June.

Voldemort had to admit the terrifying possibility that in trying to possess the boy that Potter had somehow gotten access to some of his own memories and skills. This was an explanation that fit the situation but it wasn't one Voldemort really wanted to accept. So he reminded himself the rift between the boy and the Old Man might be a sham. There were rituals and magical artifacts which could allow one magical to act through another. It is possible that his Death Eaters had actually been fighting Dumbledore...although the ferocity of the attacks seemed to point more towards Alastair Moody.

A commotion at the door brought Voldemort out of his thoughts. Death Eaters were coming in that he recognized as being from Bellatrix's team. Voldemort smiled as he saw his favorite (albeit insane) lieutenant had returned. Not only was her whole demeanor screaming of a successful mission, she was talking with Lucius Malfoy!

The group arranged themselves in front of him and all knelt except for Bellatrix who practically threw herself at his feet to grovel. Her high pitch voice was clear even faced down to the floor as it was, "My most Dread Lord, I have returned with the information needed to attack Azkaban!"

Voldemort nodded, "Rise my faithful Bellatrix and know you have my favor." He turned his serpentine gaze at Lucius. "I must admit Lucius that I'm rather surprised you were able to get out of Azkaban so quickly."

Lucius bowed his head again, "My lord, with the...divorce so vilely put upon me via the wretched Goblins, I was able to win my release so that I can care for my son and heir to House Malfoy."

Bellatrix gave a nasty laugh. "With my sister gone I wonder who we will have to send to assist you? We may need a minder to ensure all of Drakey-poo's friends don't get a bit sullied when visiting for the holidays!"

Lucius' face darkened with rage and it was a testament to how far he had fallen in the Dark Lord's service when a few of the other Death Eater's chuckled at Bellatrix's joke. There had been a time when Lucius had been feared almost as much as the Dark Lord. However this had only been among the remaining Death Eaters after Voldemort's disappearance. Those days were now just a happy memory to Malfoy.

Voldemort himself found his servant's sexual tastes abhorrent. It was bad enough wizards and witches distracted themselves with sex and lust but to do so with young boys was revolting. Again the Dark Lord wished Lucius wasn't so valuable since Voldemort would rather like having a troll bugger the wizard to death. Voldemort didn't notice the shudder that went through him at the ghost of a memory from his childhood of a dark broom closet, pain and the hands of the older orphan that held him as he...

Voldemort gave a slight shake and held up his hand, "Enough! Lucius it is well that you have returned for again we find ourselves set back through the actions of Harry Potter. Know that your life and that of your House hangs on a thread of the slimmest silk for your failures. You could not defeat six children and your son stupidly

goaded Potter into realizing a way to claim House Black from him. In my eyes you are dead and only my current need keeps you from serving me as an Inferi. If this future is not to your liking then even a hint of failure should be avoided."

Voldemort turned away from the now quaking Malfoy who had gone almost as white as his hair, "Speak Bellatrix, what of Azkaban?"

"My most Dread Lord, Azkaban is ripe for the taking! While somehow defeated by Potter, the taste of freedom from Azkaban the Dementors had when searching for my late cousin burns in them. They are eager to roam and feast at your command! Plus, our inside man states that even with Director Bones' personal appeal before the Wizengamot after our...incident at the Ministry that there has been no upgrade in security. In fact between Fudge and Dumbledore there seems to be a movement to continue hiding the fact that you have returned! They fear the news of your rebirth will cower all of Britain!" Bellatrix's eyes shone with something akin to lust at the thought of the power her lord had over all Britain.

Voldemort focused his aura upon her as a reward. Over the years he had found his power acted like a drug upon her. Thus he kept her loyal regardless of any failures of not giving in to her repeated attempts to offer herself to him sexually. Bellatrix's breast heaved as she wallowed in his directed aura and only her heavy robes masked her suddenly erect nipples and smell of her moist sex.

Before Voldemort could ask more of Azkaban an alarm sounded. It was the warning of an incoming emergency portkey. All of the Death Eaters rose with wands out as a black robed figure appeared on a raised dais in the corner. All emergency portkeys had a delay built into them to bring them to this spot since there was almost always someone in the room even if Voldemort wasn't so as to be at the Dark Lord's beck and call.

Voldemort easily recognized Marcus Flint; the very one who had spoiled the trap against Potter. He smiled at the thought of what torture he would inflict upon the teen before turning him over to Bellatrix as a reward for her success today. However he suddenly realized the young man was under some sort of spell such as the imperious curse.

Many of his Death Eaters realized this as well and they raised their wands. "No! He doesn't have a wand. I want to see what the meaning of this is!" Voldemort commanded.

Flint seemed to vacantly stare into space but at Voldemort's words his head came around and then slowly walked towards the Dark Lord. Voldemort eye's narrowed and his magic rose about him like a mist. His wand surreptitiously tracked the teen. However at twenty paces the young man dropped to his knees and bowed at the waist. "To the self-styled Dark Lord Voldemort, I bear greetings from the Ancient and Most Noble House of Black!"

Flint spoke but the voice that came out of his mouth was not his own. A collective gasp went up when most recognized the voice of Harry Potter!

"By now I'm sure you've had time to review the little fiasco your Death Nibblers got into last night. I want to personally thank you for giving me the opportunity to avenge my parents and Sirius Black with the death of the traitor Peter Pettigrew. I assure you his death was most painful."

Many of the Death Eaters furtively looked at their lord, aghast at the blatant disrespect the Potter whelp was showing their Dark Lord! After a bit of labored breathing, Flint continued; his eyes dead and unblinking.

"As Lord Potter-Peverell-Black I am officially declaring war between my Houses and that of House Gaunt as well as those Houses which ally themselves with the so called Lord Voldemort. I'm sure this won't come as a surprise but I felt I could accommodate all those protocols your Pureblood followers hold so dear."

Voldemort could tell that Bellatrix was fuming and only by focusing his own aura on her kept her from blasting Flint into a bloody mess before him. He himself was finding this declaration very interesting. One could easily see it as something Narcissa would think up but this was far too brash for the subtle ex-Malfoy.

"To you who was once Tom Marvolo Riddle I can only say you have my scorn. You had power, ambition and good looks. Yet you let your time in the orphanage warp and ruin you. So you had a hard life. Well boo-fucking-hoo because I had one too and I didn't let it turn

me into a twisted mockery of a man who can't even deal with his own urges. Pretty sad, Tommy-boy that you broke your own soul up rather than rub one out occasionally. Pity considering you could have probably bagged a different witch in every broom closet in Hogwarts with the looks you gave up."

Voldemort suddenly found he was on his feet and his followers cowering at the hiss of hate that escape his lips. The more learned Death Eaters knew they had all just heard a secret which their Lord might kill to keep and they shuddered under their robes in fear. Voldemort himself knew his earlier fears had been correct. How else could Potter know of his time growing up! Did this mean Potter knew why he had split his soul? Were his horcruxes in danger?

"So Moldywart, I just wanted to say hi and let you know I'm coming for you. Your followers are all dead; their bodies just haven't caught up with that fact yet. I'll save Bellatrix for my friend Neville. Sure I'll have to convince him to use some of the...interesting ways for her to die that I've thought up but I think I can persuade him. By the time we're done, she'll be going to Hell thankful for it since I'm going to make sure no devil was as inventive or cruel."

This time Bellatrix did bring her wand up but with a gesture it flew into Voldemort's hand. A stern glare from the Dark Lord shut her down.

"So that's all I have. I just want to tell you that where you failed with Britain, I shall succeed. Of course I'm not going to rule over Britain but rather bring it all down. All those wonderful little traditions your followers crow about will be overthrown and their backward kingdom burned to the ground to be forgotten. Sad so few will live that long to see it."

Again a collective gasp went up from the Death Eaters. This was Harry Potter? All eyes were riveted to the young man whose body seemed to be fading quickly.

"Before old Markie here finally runs out of petrol, I have a small request. I mean you did use my blood to regain your form, Voldy, so I figure you sort of owe me. I'm sure that Lucius Malfoy will worm his way out of Azkaban soon so I would like to leave him a personal message. Be a pal and give it to him. I'm sure he has access to a pensieve so he won't have to get it second-hand."

All eyes went to Lucius Malfoy. His face was impassive but those who knew him all could tell he was livid with rage at Potter's words."

Flint's body took some more labored breaths before becoming calm as if marshalling himself for a great task. Yet when his mouth opened to speak again it wasn't the voice of Potter that came forth.

"Ohh...yes! Right there...oh Merlin yes! Oh Harry fuck me harder! Harder! Yes! Yes! Oh your cock is so hard and hot...yes...oh god! Don't Stop! Please...oh God! Oh God!...Oh don't stop....oh!...oh!...Yes! Oh Harry! I'm cumming! Here it comes! HaaAAAAArrry!"

At the sound of Narcissa's final orgasmic scream, Flint's body suddenly caught fire and in mere moments was reduced to a nasty pile of ash and burnt robes. A stunned group of Death Eaters stared at the smoldering pile in front of them.

Almost as one they all jerked at the sudden sound of Bellatrix's laugh, a laugh that was very different from her normal nasty cackle. This sound was almost...normal; a laugh filled with genuine amusement.

Bellatrix laughed a bit more till she turned to Lucius whose face was practically purple with rage, "I haven't heard Cissy scream like that since her sixth year at Hogwarts when she was home for the holidays! I caught old Damien Rosier giving it to her in the Greenhouse. I'd forgotten what a screamer my sister is." Bellatrix suddenly gave Lucius a hard, cold look, "Not that you probably ever knew that, eh Malfoy? My sister hasn't had the body of a boy since she was ten so I doubt she ever stiffened your up wand enough for you to make her scream like that!"

Lucius swelled up even more in rage, more so as again other Death Eaters openly mocked him with laughter. His wand came up and then whipped back down as if his arm had been yanked by an invisible puppeteer. Bellatrix saw the movement and again laughed; this time her usual mocking cackle as she knew that Lucius' knew how tenuous his fate was right now. Even Voldemort's face had a mocking smile upon it which confirmed this.

Through Lucius' rage only one thought burned in him: revenge on Harry Potter!

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ST. MUNGO'S, LONDON – OCTOBER 2nd – AFTERNOON

Nymphadora was having a wonderful dream. She was in a Roman bath that looked a lot like the prefect's bath back at Hogwarts. Behind her was a mermaid washing her hair while a nearby centaur sang a wonderful tune while strumming a lyre. The water was warm and it made her tingle. So much so that it felt like the water was caressing her making her nipples hard and her sex throb.

Her hands wandered down to her pussy to find it hot and moist. That it was underwater and yet sticky hot didn't matter to her; this was a dream right? She sighed as the mermaid started to play with her sensitive nipples instead of working on her hair. Nymphadora snuggled back into the warmth as the sensual feeling washed over her.

"I so love your breasts Tonks. They are just the right size and fit you so well. I especially like how hard your nipples get!" the mermaid breathed in her ear; her voice was deeply manly. Nymphadora sighed and her nipples seemed to harden even more.

"I wish I could fuck your tits, Tonks. I bet that would feel just brilliant! I never got the courage to try something like that before I got booted off the Quidditch team," the mermaid said in the same deep husky voice. The feeling of sexual tension seemed grow and the centaur's song had changed to something a lot more erotic.

Wait...when did mermaids ever play Quidditch?

Tonks awoke to find herself propped up in her bed, the book she had been reading still on her lap. However her sleeping robe was open and her breasts were exposed; her nipples were as hard in the waking world as they had been in her dreams. The privacy curtains were pulled around her bed and she was shocked to see Harry Potter standing near her bed with his robe open. He was stroking his erect cock and looking at her intently.

"Wha...Harry what are you...ohHHhh!" Tonks tried to ask as the sexual feeling Harry was giving off really hit her. From what she remembered from back at the cloak shop she could tell Harry was close to cumming.

"What I'm going to do is make a sticky mess all over those brilliant tits of yours, cousin!" Harry said with obvious lust in his voice as he stroked his cock faster. Tonks could tell he was about to cum especially with the sudden increase in sexual energy that seemed to go right to her clit.

Tonks moaned and pinched her nipples but as Harry started to moan with in time with her she leaned over, ignoring the sudden pain in her injured side. She wasn't going to waste the opportunity she'd had wanted ever since she realized what was going on back in Gringotts. She reached out and took Harry's cock away from him and started to expertly jerk the base of his prick while she sucked the rest of it into her mouth.

As Harry began to cum, she fought the urge to swoon as the hot spurts hit the back of her throat and her own sex spasmed with the orgasm brought upon by the teen's flaring aura. His seed was hot in her mouth and it tasted better than even her fantasies had dreamed it could be. Stuck in the hospital bed she had found frigging to the dreams of Harry easily won over brooding about the ambush. She lashed the head of his penis with her tongue, causing Harry to jerk and moan and even grab the back of her head to steady himself as she greedily sucked his fiery cum out of him.

Harry moaned as Tonks gave his dick a demon of a tongue lashing. Finally he couldn't take any more, "Okay, please pax! I yield! Whoa Nelly!" Harry cried.

Tonks looked up with a grin, "Not the big, bad Lord now are you?"

Harry gave a weak chuckle, "I never argue with a witch with my balls in her hands!"

Tonks chuckled in return and released Harry's block and tackle and buttoned up her robe. She grinned at the mock hurt look Harry gave while she did this. "Don't worry Lord Black; I'm sure we can arrange a viewing in a better venue when they finally let me out of here."

Harry laughed, "Well I figured this was better than just giving you flowers."

Tonks couldn't help but blush deeply, "I'll say!" Tonks blushed even more at the sound of unbridled need and lust in her voice. She really needed to get a hold of herself but Harry just drove her crazy!

Harry walked over to the table and pocketed a small laughing Buddha statue that hadn't been there before she fell asleep. Tonks motioned with a nod of her head, "What's that?"

"Oh this little beauty is something Cissy found to keep my aura in check. I didn't want everyone else in the ward to enjoy your present," Harry replied.

Tonks nodded, suddenly remembering, "You know I think my Mum used that on me when I was a kid and was just starting to be able to change my appearance. Those were weird times; most people don't see a different person in the mirror every time they look into one for over a year!"

Harry reached out and ran his hand through Tonks' long black hair. "I have to say I really like your actual form. Don't get me wrong because your pink punk hair is really you but I sort of wish you would look like this more. I can understand why in your 'auror' form you keep your breasts smaller but your normal rack is very, very nice!"

Tonks blushed some more but turned her face away from Harry. "I...I guess I just don't feel pretty enough like this. I mean my mum and aunts are just beautiful and I just feel like I don't measure up to them."

Harry snorted, "I think you need to remember that your mum and aunts aren't you. Sure I would say Narcissa is better looking than you but looks aren't everything. You are probably the most normal witch I know Tonks...well except for maybe Katie or Lilith and they are both Muggleborn. I mean for a woman who can cast spells and change her appearance you have got to be the one gal I'd have no trouble going into a Muggle pub with and watching a football game or go out dancing in a club. You like fun and have a great personality. I don't know why but it seems like Magicals are sort of stiff and stuck up. Hell even Hermione is like that and she's a

Muggleborn! You always make everything a lot more fun, cousin." Harry said with true feeling in his voice.

Tonks couldn't help but blush again as she reached out and hugged Harry. "Thanks Harry...that means a lot to me. How about we keep my true form a little something we share together?"

Harry nuzzled the spot behind Tonks' ear, "Sure Tonksie but don't think I don't want to shag a certain pink-haired auror either! I'm betting she's a fantastic fuck!"

Tonks shivered a bit with need and cursed her wound which actually was throbbing pretty bad due to her earlier dive for Harry's cock. Harry seemed to sense this and he broke the hug. He also pulled out his wand and replaced the silence charm with the muffliato charm he had learned from Narcissa.

Tonks rubbed her side, "Speaking of my mother, I really want to thank you for bringing us back into the Black family. I never really knew how much being cut off from the larger Black family hurt my mum. I think she spent most of the time when visiting me crying about it."

Harry smiled, "Well she better get used to crying because Cissy suggested giving her the home she and her sister's grew up in since it's empty. She thinks your mum would be a good one to take over my plans regarding the culture of Magical Britain. She could make sure that what needs to be saved is saved and not destroyed in the coming blow-out."

Tonks couldn't help but shiver a bit at the matter-of-fact way Harry discussed the future like there was going to be a catastrophic war. "Come on Harry, things are bad with the Dark Lord back but after the fight the other night I'm betting you can take him and stop the war in its tracks."

Harry gave Tonks a sad look, "I wish it were that easy, cousin. Not everything wrong these days is because of the Death Eaters."

The young lord stood and leaned down and kissed her thoroughly. "You get better. I'm thinking of asking Director Bones if I can hire you as my bodyguard on detached duty from the Ministry."

Tonks snorted, "I think after the fight I should be the one asking if I can tag along with you for protection!"

"Come on Tonks, you did great but we were surprised out in the open and outnumbered. I think you acquitted yourself very well and I know Director Bones thinks the same because she told me to my face after you got shipped here. Anyway, I have a lot of business to wrap up. I've been running around setting up the return of all the Muggleborns that couldn't go back to Hogwarts due to the Potter Fund collapsing. So I've got a lot to do before I can finally get back to Hogwarts."

Nymphadora couldn't help but feel an emptiness well up in her at the prospect of Harry leaving. What was it about him that made her feel like she had never felt about a bloke before? It was just an odd feeling in the back of her mind of how she wanted him to come to bed, make love to her and fill her up with child. It was crazy! She'd never had the 'Mother Weasley' urge before...ever!

Harry turned and gave a little wave, "I'll be sending you updates via Hedwig so watch for my owl. Get better soon cousin; I'd really like to see what a fun-loving, pink-haired witch is like in bed!"

Tonks smiled as she watched Harry leave. Oh she was going to be spending her waking and dreaming hours thinking of just what she was going to do to the young wizard when she was finally fit for duty! Oh she had plans! Deliciously evil plans, she thought wickedly!

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Harry took the lift up to the long-term spell damage ward. Once on the floor, Harry waited till he was alone and pulled out his father's invisibility cloak and put it on. He had had Dobby fetch it from Hogwarts. The wizard and the elf had laughed together when Dobby related the look on the face of all the teachers during a staff meeting when the elf had delivered his note about all of the Muggleborns returning. This on top of the stark demand for Hedwig to be released or Harry would sue the Headmaster. It might burn Hermione's bum but having two house elves eager to please certainly rocked.

Harry cast a silence charm on himself and then began to carefully make his way down the corridor. He couldn't help but look into the ward where the Longbottoms were kept. He reminded himself that

his new research company needed to also look into better mental care. Magicals weren't much beyond just tossing people with mental problems into an asylum and forgetting about them. Harry wondered how well Neville's parents would be if they had had years of Muggle psychiatric therapy. He was sure they would probably be better than the shambling wrecks he saw in the ward.

He went two doors down. Checking again to insure he was alone, Harry ducked into the room. He wasn't surprised to find that this was a single occupancy room. He hadn't expected Narcissa's mother to be in a room where she might have to share with potential half-breeds and Muggleborns!

Harry looked down at the woman in the bed. It was hard to look at her and see the utter hate that was in the ruined woman's heart considering she was still very beautiful. However after listening to some of Cissy's stories, Harry knew this woman represent much of what was wrong in magical Britain. Thus he had no problems with what he was about to do.

Harry pulled out a syringe and took the woman's arm. Luckily her pale skin made it easy to find a vein. Harry found a good one and stuck her with the syringe and pushed. The empty syringe did nothing but force air into the vein which was exactly what Harry wanted. He pulled the syringe out and put a small healing stone like the one Griphook had used to heal his hand back at Gringotts to cover up the small puncture wound.

Harry gazed down at the woman. This was the first person he was executing with forethought. He felt like he should feel worse but he didn't. Harry didn't feel much as he watched the woman die as the air bubbles created an embolism. Harry noted for all of the magical world's wonders that they didn't have a simple charm on the woman to alert the staff she was in danger of dying. Just another thing that needed serious change before all was done.

Harry shook his head at the lack of care evident in the ease of the killing he just did as well as his own lack of emotion. Taking someone's life shouldn't be this easy, he felt, especially when it was simply to make it easier to get Andromeda back into the house she grew up in. Shaking his head again, Harry apparated away with a small pop.

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COLEHAM SANDWICH BAR, SHREWSBURY – OCTOBER 2nd – LATE AFTERNOON

Harry sipped his beer after finishing up some of his chips. It was times like this that being magical was nice considering the waitress didn't bat an eyebrow when he ordered beer. He had felt a bit peckish after apparating to Shrewsbury from London. Since he hadn't had a lot of practice since he had finally found Riddle's memories of learning the skill, Harry had taken the trip a series of jumps. While he didn't feel all that magically drained, his stomach seemed to go from wanting to void what he had to screaming for more food. Luckily the pub was just about two blocks from Sally-Anne Perks lived. He planned on seeing her after he finished his lunch.

Not that she knew it since he had been unable to contact her either by owl or phone. Lilith was worried her parents were screening her mail and calls since she hadn't gotten anything from her friend in over a month. Before she had left Grimmauld Place, Lilith had told Harry of her worries about her friend due to how her parents saw magic. Harry was worried too since some of the things Sally-Anne's parents had said as related to Lilith smacked far to much of things Vernon and Petunia had said to him over the years. The added religious angle didn't make Harry feel any better.

However, he was here now and he doubted two deeply religious and possibly bigoted Muggles were going to stop him if a team of Death Eaters couldn't kill him. Plus he was happy to just take some time to relax a bit. While it was nice having Dobby and Winky wait on him and have access to some brilliant sex with Lilith or Narcissa at the drop of a hat (or more properly his trousers) it had been rather hectic of late. Narcissa had outdone herself and had a list of things to do ready for when Harry and Lilith had finished up with the aurors. Harry had been on the go ever since.

He had busy meetings with Griphook as well as other parties. It had been nice to meet Lilith's brother while he had met with Martin Creswell of the prestigious firm of Kettleridge, Creswell & Dippet. While the firm mostly did business associated with House Greengrass, they had also done a lot of work with House Potter considering House Greengrass had been the primary UK shipper of

House Potter's goods. Harry had been also surprised to find that House Zabini had done most of the shipping of those same goods outside of Britain. He would have to ask Blaise about that the next time he saw her.

Creswell had told how sad it was that the old firm that had done most of the Potter accounts hadn't survived a Death Eater attack back in the War. Apparently House Potter and their associates were renown for their honesty and fair-trading and the loss was still being felt. Creswell had lamented how so many of the good Houses had fallen and so many of the Houses like Rosier and Malfoy were still prosperous through cheating, bribes and other skullduggery.

The meeting with Creswell had gone well and Harry had left confident that with the Peverell money available he would be able to make in-roads to regain what House Potter had lost. This freed up the Black fortune to start his research company if only to initially use to get the Muggleborns back into school. Creswell had also set up a meeting with Daniel Greengrass for later in the month to deal with business issues. Harry looked forward to meeting the man.

House Greengrass intrigued Harry because he had always wondered about Daphne. She had been a fiery, outspoken girl in his First and Second Year but by the end of his Fifth she barely spoke. She was often jokingly called Tracey's Shadow because she was almost always in the company of the Barbados born witch. The few times Harry had been partnered with Daphne, she had been quiet and non-committal. There had been something in her eyes that Harry felt she was trying to hide. Daphne always made Harry think of a beautiful flower that had been stepped on.

He wasn't too sure he liked Tracey Davis. While an out-spoken critic of a lot of the 'typical' ideas of Slytherin House, she could be a pain in the arse. The witch always seemed touchy and had a serious chip on her shoulder. Harry could understand much of it considering she was black whose mother was a Muggleborn witch in a Slytherin House. However there was an edge to Tracey that grated on him.

Harry hadn't like it how just when Daphne might open up to him a little, Tracey would swoop in and collect her like some sort of chaperone. So Harry was interested to see what Daphne's father was like. Her sister Astoria, a year behind Luna and Ginny, certainly was still like the Daphne he remembered from his First year.

Harry watched the telly as he finished his meal. He noticed that one of the teams playing was Lilith's brother's Shadrach's favorite team. He had had a coffee mug with the team logo on it when Harry had met him the other day. He seemed to be the good bloke Lilith had said he was. Shadrach also hadn't given him crap about putting his sister in danger and had simply been thankful Harry had saved her life.

Of course Harry wondered with a grin if the older brother might have felt the same way if he had seen what he and his sister had been up to earlier that day. The pair had stopped by Jorkin's to break the news that Lilith was quitting. Mrs. Prang, however, had been out at Gringotts so Lilith had taken the time to pack up her things. Of course watching her bend over to get her personal belongs soon prove too much for Harry and the teens had ended up shagging on the cutting board.

Harry had wanted to show Lilith how nice a good bugging could be but she had wanted him to finish in her mouth so Harry content himself with just fucking her doggy-style. He had to admit one of the fitting mirrors made it so he could see the Lilith's face as they fucked and it certainly made the experience better. Once again Lilith couldn't swallow all of his cum and he got to see her pretty tits shiny with his seed. Harry was beginning to think she did it on purpose to turn him on so he'd get it up quicker.

However, Mrs. Prang had returned so Lilith had gone in to talk with her, carrying the bag of galleons Harry had given her to help defray the cost of hiring a temporary worker till they had replaced Lilith. Little did Lilith know was her co-workers Helene and Morgan had remembered him from the day 'of weird feelings' and had followed the pair around the shop. It turned out that in their haste to shag, neither Lilith or Harry realized that someone on the other side of the door was within the range of his orgasmic aura.

So while Lilith and Mrs. Prang had talked, Harry had been confronted by two horny witches. Luckily the sight of Lilith's full breasts covered with his seed had indeed gotten him hard so he had taken the opportunity to have this 'problem' taken care of. It had been quite a sight to watch the two twenty-something's kneel and fight over who got to suck his cock. They finally settled down to alternating having one suck him while the other wanked him off. The

whole thing had been really erotic and he had responded by cumming more than he ever remembered doing. The two older witches delighted in the shimmering shower that covered their faces. He left them eagerly kissing and licking his cum off each other's faces. Two more satisfied customers' to House Black's traveling sex show Harry had thought impishly to himself! Sirius would have been so proud!

Harry knew that he had a dark and probably very short road ahead of him but he had to admit some days it was good to be him.

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Harry strolled down the two blocks of Greyfriar 's Road till he came to the red brick building he was looking for. Getting the Muggleborns back to Hogwarts was important from a safety stand point just as much as it was about giving the chance to continue their education. Harry knew that his little message he had sent Voldemort might easily trigger reprisals. He know sort of wished he'd waited a bit but he reminded himself Narcissa had been right when they had worked together on Marcus Flint. She didn't agree with Harry's wording but she had felt the message would not only enrage Voldemort which made him make rash decisions but work create a doubt in the Death Eaters in the abilities of their Dark Lord.

Both had laughed long and hard when Dobby had popped into the bedroom to tell them of the news of Lucius Malfoy's release. The thought of the look on Lucius' face when he heard the message seemed to make Narcissa act like a giddy school-girl. She had certainly fucked like a demented Harry Potter fan-girl as she had practically attacked him. Not that Harry had complained since Lilith had left the night before. Harry found he already hated sleeping alone so he had invited Narcissa into bed with him for a morning cuddle when she had come to brief him about what he had needed to do that day. She hadn't seemed to mind they had bollixed up her careful timetable with their fucking!

Harry looked at the quaint house. It was very clean and well-maintained. The only real difference from any of the other houses on the street was the large ornate cross that hung in one of the windows. Harry also noticed the door mat which said, "Jesus Saves" when he rang the doorbell. Jesus must shop on Wednesday and use Double-Coupons Harry thought irreverently as he remembered

a particularly annoying radio commercial that had run a few years ago which always seemed to play when Harry was making dinner for his relatives which had the most wretched jingle. A jingle which he knew he'd be hearing for the rest of the day!

The door opened and rather severe looking woman gave him the once over, "Yes? I'm sorry but we don't accept solicitations."

Before she could shut the door, Harry spoke up politely, "I'm sorry ma'am but I'm here to see Sally-Anne if I could. Is she here today?"

The woman (Sally-Anne's mother?) looked at him with even more suspicion. "Why do you want to see her? None of her old friends come around here any more."

Harry smiled, "I'm a friend of hers from school. My best friend Hermione Granger was Sally-Anne's room-mate and I..."

The woman practically hissed, "So you're one of those...people?"

Harry's heart sank; this woman could practically be Aunt Petunia's understudy with the way she talked.

"Yes, I am one of 'those people' but both my friend and I grew up neighborhoods just like this one. I live in Surrey myself...well I did before I moved to London. Hermione lives in Winchester. Her parents are dentists, all very normal."

"Why do you want to see my daughter?" the woman again practically snapped.

Harry took a breath to calm himself. This woman reminded him far too much of his Aunt Petunia and getting closer to Aunt Marge for his liking. "Mrs. Perks, my name is Harold Black and your daughter went to school via a scholarship fund that my family set up centuries ago. It recently had some management issues that I only became aware of a week ago. I'm trying to do right and insuring your daughter can continue her education."

Before the woman could respond to this a male voice called from what sounded like the living room, "Who's at the door, luv? Is it Kenny? If it is, tell him to come round in a week and I'll have some work for him."

Mrs. Perks shouted back, "It's one of those freaks from that school."

Harry's eyes narrowed dangerously. This woman was getting very close to finding out how much he hated being called a freak. Mr. Perks came quickly at his wife's words. He looked about as happy to see Harry as his wife had been.

"What do you want, boy? We don't want any more do to with any of your Godless kind. We should have never let our daughter go off to that wretched school. Now she's a fallen woman with a bastard, freak child. So just run along before I call the cops!"

Harry had enough and his wand was out and before the pair could do more than blink had them stunned and bound. He unceremoniously dumped them on the couch. He looked around till he saw the stairs going up. Halfway up he could hear the cries of a baby.

He cautiously made his way up and found the door from which the cries came from behind. However before he could knock he could make out Sally-Anne's voice.

"Shush, shush, my little love. Please don't cry! Grandmum doesn't like it when you cry! You don't want your mummy to get another beating do you? You love your mummy, don't you? So don't cry my little angel, please don't cry."

Harry struggled not to lose the lunch he had finished not 15 minutes before. Tasting Pettigrew's flesh was not as revolting at the implications of what he had just heard. For just a moment he was seven years old again, Vernon's belt buckle leaving welts in his back as Petunia screamed for Vernon to beat the freakiness out of him.

Harry struggled to master himself. After a few breaths he finally got himself under enough control to focus his aura. He thought of Luna, the 'loony' Luna that always made him smile and made him feel good. He projected those thoughts through his aura and sure enough the crying baby quickly stopped crying and seemed to fall asleep if the sounds Sally-Anne was making was any indication.

However even as the baby stopped crying, Harry could hear Sally-Anne begin to weep. The sound tore at his heart since the crying sounded like despair incarnate. Harry couldn't take any more so he

opened the door. The room was dark, lit only by a night light even though it was a rather pleasant day outside. The bedroom was like one would expect a young teen girl to have except for the crib in the corner. The walls, however, were covered with lots of posters from the Yank Star Wars movies. Sally-Anne even had a plush R2-D2 on her bed. Harry had to smile; he wondered how many witches Sally-Anne had confused trying to explain the movies to them!

His smile faded when he saw the wreck of what once was a bright and bubbly girl. Harry hadn't really hung out with Sally-Anne much but they had always gotten along. If there is one thing he remember about her was she was a cheerful person even when things where bad. Sally-Anne always had a joke to lighten up a bad mood. To see her sobbing against the crib of her bastard child, the son of a real bastard made Harry for once glad he was the tool of vengeance chosen by Fate. He would enjoy balancing the scales for the crimes against this poor girl!

Harry knelt next to the sobbing witch, "Sally-Anne! Sally-Anne!" The girl continued to sob, seemingly unaware of the hand on her shoulder. Harry wasn't sure what to do. His gaze fell on the plush R2-D2 and a really stupid idea popped into his head.

Harry leaned in and spoke urgently into her ear, "Sally-Anne, I'm her to rescue you; I'm here with Ben Kenobi. I've got your droids! We've got to go before Vader comes back!"

Sally-Anne's head came up and her unseeing eyes turned to Harry, "Ben Kenobi...my droids...wha? Harry?" Who he was finally seemed to dawn on the witch.

He took her hands which gave him a slight shock, "Yes Sally-Anne, it's me Harry. Lilith was worried about you when you didn't respond to our calls and letters so I came personally to check on you."

Sally-Anne eye's seemed to focus more but she still seemed confused. "Lilith? She hasn't written to me for over two months! She's given up on me just like everyone else. Mum was right that no one wants to be around a fallen woman!" With that tears welled up in the girl's eyes and she started to sob against Harry.

As Sally-Anne wept against him, Harry knew her parent's fates were sealed. When the young mother had finally turned toward Harry he

had seen the bandage over one cheek and that one eye had a nasty shiner. Her hair was a mess and her whole demeanor was of defeat and despair.

Harry found himself just speaking soft words, not really saying much else other than, "It's going to be alright" as the young witch sobbed. However while Harry tried to comfort Sally-Anne, he fought back his amazement. The second Sally-Anne's flesh touched his own; Harry had felt a tug to the Blood. He didn't know how, but Sally-Anne was of the Black Blood. As he nuzzled her hair and spoke soothing words into her hair, he was amazed he never had realized how much her hair and his own were similar. This was a fantastic development and one which was going to make what had to happen all the easier.

"Sally-Anne, listen to me. Lilith has been writing to you since she got out of hospital. She said you stopped writing her about a month ago. She's been trying to reach you so I think your parents have been screening your calls and mail. Trust me; she's worried sick about her best friend."

Sally-Anne stopped sobbing but still clung to Harry as if she might slip into a dark pit if she let go. "Where are my parents? If they find out you are here...oh Harry you have to leave before they find you here!"

Harry couldn't help but give a nasty laugh, "Oh your parents know I'm here. I have them bound and stunned downstairs."

Sally-Anne looked up at Harry with a gleam in her eye that was quickly replaced with despair again. "Harry you have to get out of here before the aurors get here! They've got to know you've used magic here!"

Harry gave a slight chuckle as he took Sally-Anne's chin in his hand and forced her to look at him, "Sally-Anne, a lot has happened since end of term, okay? I'm now an emancipated adult and I'm Head of my House. Actually I'm head of three houses with galleons to burn. No aurors are going to come. I'm here to take you away from here and bring you back to Hogwarts if you want."

Harry had felt one of the most beautiful things in the world was the look of a witch who had just been brilliantly shagged and was

satiated with pleasure. However the look of hope which blossomed on the beaten witch's face at his words was so divine it practically burned with beauty.

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Esther Perks woke to cries in an accent she didn't quite recognize. She was being roughly carried and she found her hands were bound. She frantically looked around and saw she was being carried by some burly men dressed in old style Calvinist clothing. Around them were men and women similarly dressed, screaming and bearing torches.

The mob took her to what looked like a village square of some recreation of a 17th century village. The men roughly threw her to the ground. An old man standing on the porch of what looked to be some official building with an odd crest with four different animals on it rapped his cane for silence.

The old man who had a long, white beard and half-moon glasses looked down on her with a baleful gaze, "Esther Anne Perks, you have been found guilty of defiling the Lord's teachings. Our Lord Jesus spoke of Love and Compassion and turning the other cheek. He spoke of remaining true to one's family and loved ones. You, Esther Perks, have renounced Our Lord's teachings and thus are in league with the Dark Lord." The old man gestured to a poster of what looked like a man crossed with a snake. He had burning eyes and no nose. The poster read: He's watching you!

Esther Perks struggled and shouted back at the man. "How dare you! I am a God-Fearing woman who keeps to the Good Book! I have taken My Lord Jesus into my heart and His teachings are my life."

The crowd jeered at this until the old man rapped his cane for silence again. "Your crimes have already been well documented, woman! You have raised your hand against your own flesh and blood. You have turned your back on one you yourself helped bring into this world."

The old man pointed a boney finger at her and Esther couldn't help but gulp in fear. "Did you ask Sally-Anne if she wanted to be brought into this world as your daughter? Did she agree to be your child?

No! She came into this world because of you and your equally guilty husband! No child should suffer for the sins of the parents who called them unasked into this world. All of us must emulate our Lord's to sacrifice when it comes to our children. We owe it to them, those we called into existence, to give all for them. To repay the debt of bringing them out of nothing into the pain, sorrows, and sin of this world. You, Ester Anne Perks, have foully reneged on your responsibilities to your own blood!"

Esther was about to deny these charges when a beautiful red-head with piercing green eyes grabbed her by the chin and forced Esther to look at her. "When the Dark Lord came knocking, my James spent his life as carelessly as one might toss a Knut into a fountain; his only wish to buy me a few precious seconds. When the Dark Lord came knocking, I channeled all that I was into a charm to protect my beloved boy, my blessed little angel. My mother's love beat back the very Death Curse itself."

The red-head spit full in Esther's face. "There is no punishment under Earth and Sky that is enough to balance the sin of a mother rejecting her child. Hell is truly a blessed place for it allows those of us in Heaven to know the unjust burn in the fires stoked by the very sins committed by their damned souls."

A man with glasses and unruly hair struggled with another man with raven-hair like her husband's own as they lifted a long flat stone. She screamed as they laid it down upon her. The crowd cheered.

The old man looked down at her and suddenly Esther noted the eyes were no longer a watery blue but the same piercing green the red-headed woman's had been. "You know Mrs. Perks that most Muggles never understood what stoning meant. Being stoned to death wasn't about being pelted with rocks but being pressed slowly...and painfully to death."

Sure enough the men continued to pile rocks of different sizes upon her. Esther screamed as the pain welled up within her.

"In fact to this day in the Middle East people find the bodies of evil people like you under what was thought to be marking cairns." Those green eyes flashed and the old man faded away to reveal the teen that had come to the door.

"I hope this is but a taste of what is to come. Know you have earned this pain and I am merely the instrument to bring about your reward for your crimes. The beauty of this is your own conscience is creating all of this. You damn yourself!"

Esther screamed and screamed as her whole world dissolved into nothing else but the jeers of the crowd crying, "More weight!" and pain...endless pain.

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Mark Perks awoke to find himself in a conference room filled with men in odd robes. All of them looked either unhappy or angry. All of this seemed directed at him. At the head of the table was figure whose face was hidden by a hood but from under which were two green glowing eyes.

Mark looked around only to find he was tied to the chair. He also noticed that to a man (or women for there were a few) they all had the same raven-black hair of his father and grandfather. The room had the feeling of some old 18th century mansion of a rich lord.

A stunning beauty with long luscious hair (and a body to match) who stood next to the hooded one's chair called out, "Draw nigh and attend to this meeting of the Ancient and Most Noble House of Black!" All of the seated quieted down and looked towards the woman.

The woman continued, "My lords and ladies, wizard and witches all, we come together tonight under grim tidings for one of our own has committed the most heinous of crimes! He has betrayed the Blood!" The room dissolved in discontented mutterings as everyone around the table seemed to be speaking to those near them, many of them looking daggers at him.

The woman raised her hand to quiet the crowd, "Yes, one of our own would sully the Blood that goes back to before the time of Merlin. Dishonor the Blood which has been in these Isles past when history merges with legend. The Blood that binds us all here today has been betrayed by he who sits before you."

This time all eyes turned towards Mark and he couldn't help but want to scream in fear. He had to wake up! This had to be a dream!

From out from under the hood came a cold voice, one which did not sound even remotely like it could hold pity or mercy. "Mark Gaius Perks, do you understand your crimes?"

"No! What is the meaning of all this! I am a lawful, God-fearing man who is guilty of nothing!"

The woman who spoke earlier gave a nasty, evil sounding laugh. She gestured with a remote and the giant painting of a House crest behind the hooded man went blank. Another gesture brought up pictures of his daughter. She clicked through the pictures which showed every welt, every bruise on Sally-Anne's body. The table was abuzz with an angry undercurrent of menace as they spoke in low tones together at the implications of each slide. These murmurs changed to cries of outrage when the slide showed what looked to be cigarette burns on a small baby's arm.

The woman looked back at him, "Your wife does not smoke, yes? Does she not follow your lead? Have you not often told her, 'As God is the Head of Man; Man is the Head of Woman'? So we are to believe you are innocent of this? Even if not all of these sins came from your hand, it was you that allowed it."

Another woman rose, a woman who could only be said to radiate insanity. She gestured toward him, "I have done terrible crimes, known to all at this table. While my madness might excuse some of the actions I have taken I know I am a damned soul. Where I to drink from the cup of sanity I would impale myself slowly over a splintery pole festured with salt so I could feel a whisper of the pain I've inflicted upon others."

The woman whipped around, her finger pointing at his face, "BUT THIS ONE IS NOT INSANE!" she screeched. "In my heart of hearts I feel the remorse at the evil I do but this one not only does not have my excuse but feels that his actions are perfectly justified! Madness might excuse my sins but what are we to make of this...thing who would do so to one of his own Blood and do so thinking it is RIGHTEOUS?"

Mark could not help but gulp in fear as again all eyes were on him and none of glares had the trace of anything remotely looking like mercy.

The woman at the head of the table spoke again, "Mark Gaius Perks, son of Marcus, son of Marius Black, wrongly cast out for being a Squib. Instead of hatred and fear, you should have rejoiced that in Sally-Anne the blood of House Black had once again manifested magic. Yet you scorned your blood-right."

Mark was confused, "What do you mean? What do you mean my grandfather was a...squid?"

The room erupted in nasty, mocking laughs. The woman face wore a sneer as if she had just stepped in dog crap. "A Squib, it is a magical who cannot manifest magic but can still see it. Your father, nor you can see what your daughter or grandfather could. "

"How can I be tried by this...this House Black? I am a Perk and grandfather never said anything about being from House Black! Let me go!" Mark cried in desperation.

The hooded one stood and the rest of the room hastened to leap to their feet. He seemed to radiate a cold feeling tinged with disgust and hate. Mark shivered as he watched as the man drew back his hood to reveal the teenager that had come to the door asking for his daughter!

"I, Harold James Black, Head of the Ancient and Most Noble House of Black by right of Blood do cast you, Mark Gaius Perks, from House Black. Your Blood is not our Blood; your flesh is not our flesh. You are nothing now but meat."

The teen gestured and the table disappeared. The insane woman started to cackle as a man who looked very much like the teen as well as a man who reminded Mark of some actor (Gary Oldman perhaps?) untied him. They roughly grabbed him and dragged him toward a pit that seemed to appear where the table had been. They threw him screaming into the pit.

Mark landed hard but he was mostly unhurt which should be impossible considering how far he fell onto the hard flagstones. However these thoughts were quickly interrupted when he realized there were growls coming from passageways surrounding him. These growls were primal and filled Mark with fear.

To Mark's left a shape came out of one of the passage ways and into the light coming down from above where he could hear jeers and the insane woman's laughter. As the shape entered into the light, Mark realized it was a huge, jet black dog with brilliant green eyes. It was a dog like no other Mark had seen. Others just like it were emerging and they circled him, sniffing and growling.

Mark looked up to see the teen looking down at him. "'God is the head of Man' you say? Well God spelled backwards is dog and I'll take a dog's loyalty to your twisting of God's teaching any day. So, let us see what dogs can do with the head of Man!"

At the snapping his fingers, the dogs leapt upon Mark whose world became nothing but howls, blood and pain...endless pain.

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GRIMMAULD PLACE, LONDON – OCTOBER 2nd – EVENING

Harry apparated back to the garden in the backyard of Grimmauld Place. Funny that it had one considering how everything about the Black House was like something out of a fun-fair horror house. To see what looked to have been a brilliant garden was sort of weird.

As he entered the house he was greeted by the sounds of three women speaking in baby-talk from the kitchen. His curiosity aroused, Harry quickly made his way through the pantry. He opened the door to the kitchen and was surprised to see Narcissa holding little baby Jacob, flanked by Sally-Anne and Luna!

Harry was surprised how his heart leapt at seeing the wide-eyed, blonde witch. He dashed over and scooped her up into a twirling hug which sent the baby into a cooing fit of happy giggles.

Narcissa gave a mock glare, "A little restraint around the baby, my lord."

Harry grinned, "Sorry Cissy, it has been too long since I've seen this pretty lady!" Luna beamed at his words and suddenly Harry found her kissing him thoroughly. "I like the hair!" Luna whispered into his ear before going back to snogging him.

"Wow, Harry, you weren't kidding about changes! When do you learn to snog like that?" Sally-Anne asked.

Harry broke the kiss causing Luna to pout prettily. He couldn't help but grin, "Well you can blame this little witch here although I must say Lilith was a good teacher as well."

The baby in Narcissa's arms began to fuss and wriggle. Sally-Anne took him from Narcissa, "I better get this little one up to bed. Then I think I'm going to take a shower and get some sleep as well. I'm just a little overwhelmed by all this."

Harry shrugged, "No problem Sally-Anne; we don't leave for Hogwarts till the day after tomorrow."

As she adjusted the baby on her shoulder, Sally-Anne's face grew serious, "So...is it done?"

Harry nodded, "I'm afraid so. Your parents died in a nasty car crash about an hour ago. Your dad ran a red light and their car was crushed by a lorry. They died instantly."

Sally-Anne thought this over for a bit. "How long after I left was this?"

Harry smiled, "Oh a few hours although from I've learned the mind is a funny thing and hours can often seem to stretch for days."

Narcissa and Luna both saw the feral look that came over Sally-Anne's face. "I guess days will have to do."

Harry gave a nasty chuckle, "Oh I can assure you they were very, very unpleasant days."

Careful not to disturb the now sleeping baby, Sally-Anne leaned over and kissed Harry, "Thank you Harry or should I call you Lord Black, my lord?"

Harry kissed her back, "Harry is fine and welcome into the family. I never had much of one growing up and now I've got people like you to care for. It's a nice feeling."

Harry watched as Sally-Anne went up the stairs. He turned back to the other two witches just as Dobby popped in and laid a plate filled with some of Harry's favorite dishes on the table. "Uh thanks Dobby, I am rather hungry. You two don't mind if I eat do you?"

Narcissa gave a small laugh, "You are such a polite young man! I still despair at Draco's table manners."

Harry chuckled as he cut into the meat pie, "Just be glad you didn't give birth to Ron Weasley!"

They all shared a chuckle. Harry tucked in while Luna and Narcissa chatted about some odd subject relating to a branch of Arithmancy he had never heard of. After getting a handle on his hunger, he finally spoke up.

"So Luna, how did you get here? I'm so glad you're here but I'm still trying to figure out the how." Harry asked.

Narcissa gave a snort, "She got here because she's somehow knows too much!" At Harry's raised eyebrow Narcissa continued as Luna had a satisfied, serene look on her face. "She somehow found out I was at Hogwarts talking with McGonagall about your return as well as all of the other students that had been forced to drop. I was heading out to the loo when there she was, obviously waiting for me."

Harry turned to Luna, "You wouldn't have my Marauder's Map would you Luna?"

Luna laughed musically, "Oh Harry you should know by now that I have my sources."

Harry grinned, "So the Nargles told you then?" Both teens laughed at this.

Narcissa went on after the pair stopped chortling. "Luna here told me she knew she could get past Madam Pomfrey and use the floo network from the Infirmary if I'd give her the address to get her past the Fidelius charm. Mindful of your earlier words regarding her, I gave them to her since the floo network is finally working again. She came through about ten minutes before Ms. Perks...well I guess she's Ms. Black now got here via the portkey you gave her."

Harry turned to Luna, "This isn't going to cause problems back at Hogwarts will it?"

Luna shrugged, "I doubt Professor Flitwick will notice I was even missing and my dorm-mates are used to me being off for hours on end. I often don't even sleep in my bed for there are all sorts of interesting places in the castle to bed down for the night."

"Well I'm glad you are here. We have so much to talk about. I've learned a lot since we last got to talk together."

Luna gave a mocking smile, "And you have gotten around as well. Narcissa here seems to give the impression I've unleashed a sexual predator upon poor old England."

Narcissa blushed, "I just said you were very adept at pleasing witches and seemed to like to practice those skills."

Luna laughed again, "So I took that to mean you've shagged every pretty bird you've met."

Harry tried to look innocent, "My Lady Lovegood, you wound me!" He patted his heart, "Your cruel words...they make it hurt right here! I have you know I've been the soul of a gentleman!"

Luna's eyebrows went up, "So you've been putting the toilet seat back down? Bravo my lord!"

Narcissa spewed out a bit of the wine she'd been drinking at Luna's last comment. As both teens laughed at her misfortune, Narcissa couldn't help but feel a twinge of loss; Luna was so like her mother, right down to her quirky sense of humor!

She also had the same look in her eye that her mother had when she wanted sex. Narcissa got up with a yawn, "Harry, I'm going to go up and work on some paperwork before bed. I'm sure you and Luna have a lot of catching up to do." She came around behind Harry who was already talking with Luna like Narcissa had ceased to exist. Excellent! With a slight wave of her wand, the golden Buddha shot up from the pocket Harry kept it in. Neither teen saw Narcissa pocket it.

Smiling to herself, Narcissa went upstairs. Little did Harry know the room next to his was unlocked. She fully expected Harry be up very quickly to shag the pretty blonde senseless if the look on his face as she left was any indication. Narcissa eagerly awaited their lovemaking! Winky had even found some toys for her to play with while they did so.

Narcissa set the little Buddha on her nightstand before going to the room next to Harry's. Luckily Sally-Anne was on the second floor and she and her baby would be far enough away from Harry's aura. From this room, however, Narcissa would be get about the same 'dose' as she had back at the cloak shop. Her nipples hardened at the thought of that day!

Narcissa smiled at her reflection in the mirror above the room's dresser. If Harry found out she had taken the Buddha for the night, she would just have to be punished, wouldn't she?

The Narcissa in the mirror smiled back at her as she began to pass the time waiting for Harry and Luna to come up with ways she might 'accidentally' get caught. Maybe Harry would make Luna punish her. Her sex grew moist at that thought.

Narcissa hummed happily to herself as she could hear the sound of the two teens coming up the stairs. It wouldn't be long now! As she hastily disrobed and laid down on the bed she marveled at how good it was to be bad!

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A/N: Okay this is another barely beta. I really don't get as much time on our one computer as my wife is doing NaNo right now. However I really like this chapter and wanted to share.

Colendo Fidem Sanguini: Keeping Faith with Blood...a fancy way of saying taking care of family.

Esther Anne Perk's end: I hope all of you American's out there recognize how Esther died. For all those outside of America, look up Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* for the low-down. A bit of a twist don't you think? The Magicals stoning the Muggle!

CHAPTER ELEVEN – BACK IN BLACK

HOGSMEADE STATION, SCOTLAND – OCTOBER 4th – LATE AFTERNOON

Harry watched as Narcissa talked to a group of girls who looked like they were either Second or Third years. After finding their names on her list, the older witch checked them off. The girls all looked at Harry and giggled. He gave them a happy smile in return. So far except for a few mock grumbles about having to go back to school, the Muggleborns were all very happy to be going back to Hogwarts.

Harry looked out at the group. He had been surprised how many had needed the Potter Fund to afford Hogwarts. Luna had told him that even the 'Saint Schools' could be a bit pricey. Harry marveled again at how little he had learned about Magical Britain while at Hogwarts. Till Luna had mentioned it after him complaining about tuitions costs, Harry had no idea there were six other schools in England and Ireland where one could go as far as one's OWLs in education. He and Hermione, Harry had found, could have gone to St. George's Magical School of England had they not both been accepted and could pay for Hogwarts.

It amazed him that with all the Pureblood's complaining about Muggleborns bringing in 'contamination' from the Muggle world, Hogwarts certainly did a piss poor job of teaching them about the magical world and its customs. Luna had simply shrugged when he had mentioned this and had told him most Muggleborns ended up migrating to places like Australia or the Americas rather than stay in the UK. Her father felt this migration might even be the reason culture classes weren't taught at Hogwarts. Lilith, who had been visiting that night, had chimed in and said she knew quite a few Muggleborns who were planning on doing just that after graduation.

Harry had to wonder if this might be one of the reasons so many Pureblood families were so weak in magical power in addition to having so few children; any potential infusion of new blood from Muggleborns didn't happen for cultural reasons as well as the simple fact most of the Muggleborns left the country. It could explain why Hogwarts was built for such a large student body but was barely being used; the Pureblood's pursuit of purity was leading them into extinction.

Harry looked over to see a girl with brilliant ginger hair talking with Sally while Lilith was watching baby Jacob nearby. She was obviously a Firstie and probably was quizzing Sally about Hogwarts. Sally had already commented to him earlier how her baby drew people to her which inevitably led the Firsties to ask her questions. So Sally had become the de facto information desk in a way; a job she seemed to relish.

Harry was happy she had seemingly recovered so quickly after being rescued from her parents. The very next day she and Harry had gone to see Martin Creswell where, after a quick blood check, she had been legally recognized as a Black. She even had her name legally changed to Sally Anne Black because her original middle name had been Esther after her mother. Sally had told him her mother had always insisted she be called Sally-Anne but she herself had felt it sounded too folksy.

The hair color of the girl talking with Sally reminded him of the Weasleys. Harry had been amazed to find out how many of them there were in England. Narcissa had told him with more than a hint of her typical aristocratic disdain how if every Weasley child went to Hogwarts, there probably would be about four to six extra kids per year, all gingers. Apparently Arthur Weasley had been the first Weasley of the clan to go to Hogwarts since 1802. Most Weasleys lived as scrub farmers eking out an almost subsistence living in the backwaters of Britain.

Harry felt this was something to look into considering the Prewitt family hadn't been very wealthy so how had Mr. Weasley manage to send seven kids to Hogwarts? It would have been far cheaper to send them to the St. Michael's School of Wizardry near Exeter. That way Mr. Weasley would only have to pay for two years of Hogwarts if any of his kids showed promise (or the desire) to get their NEWTs. Considering how much his life and the Weasleys intersected, Harry was resolved to look into the matter. He couldn't help but wonder how much gold from House Potter might have paid for the various Weasley's education.

A few more pops announced some more students had arrived by portkey. It had been far easier to give all the students portkeys than have them travel to London only to take the train to Scotland. Harry directed them to Narcissa after he got them all calmed down. Almost every student had been very enthusiastic in thanking Harry for the

chance to go back to Hogwarts. The students had either struggled trying to adapt to a Muggle school or had stayed home. For some reason none of the Saint Schools had accepted the ex-Hogwarts students. This smelled fishy to Harry and it was on his long list of things to check out.

Narcissa glanced over at him and nodded after she had finished up with the newcomers. He nodded and cast a Sonorous spell on himself. "Can I have everyone's attention? It looks like we are all here. As I'm sure you all know by now, I am Lord Harold Black. As your benefactor I would like to welcome you to or back to Hogwarts. Before we leave I would like to apologize to all you First years. Due to the inclement weather you will not be taken via boat up to the castle like all First Year classes traditionally are."

Harry could see that while the few Firsties didn't seem too put out, the older students seemed sad as they were obviously remembering their first time in the boats looking up at Hogwarts lit brilliantly against the dark Scottish sky. It made Harry sad as well but he'd rather not lose any of 'his' students to the choppy and frigid waters of the Black Lake especially with the wind which had been steadily picking up since they had begun to arrive.

"So I would like all you First Years to follow Genevieve Walker; Gina could you raise your hand?" The seventh year Slytherin raised her hand. Harry had been surprised she had been a prefect considering her mother was a Muggle. That she was a prefect with that strike against her in Slytherin House certainly was something Harry could respect. "Second Years please follow Lucinda Urquhart." The Fifth Year Slytherin waved the other group of younger students over to her. Harry was sure he was raising some eyebrows by having two Snakes be the ones shepherding the younger students but he wanted to make a point to the blood conscious Slytherins as well as one about inter-house cooperation to the rest of the school.

"Also for those of you who don't know, the carriages we'll be taking up to the castle are drawn by Thestrals. Only those who have actually seen somebody die can see them. I tell you this because no one ever told me and I thought I was going crazy last year when the carriages I had always thought had been moving by magic were being pulled by these scary looking critters. I figured I'd spare you all the headache of thinking you have gone mental if you can see them!" Harry said.

Harry smiled at the laugh this generated. Harry watched as Gina and Lucinda led the First and Second Years off to where the carriages were. The rest of the group followed; they were all laughing and joking with each other which made Harry happy. Narcissa, Lilith and Sally came over to him as he watched them leave.

"I am really surprised Hagrid isn't here to lead the first years even if they aren't going by boats to the castle," Sally said.

Harry shook his head, "Luna told me he hasn't been at school all term. I would bet he's off trying to gain allies against Voldemort for the Order of the Phoenix. Hagrid does seem to get along with a lot of the races most wizards barely acknowledge."

Harry looked over at Narcissa, "Thanks for all the help Cissy but just remember I really want you to be careful and keep your emergency portkey on you at all times. It was a real gamble in retrospect having you go to Hogwarts to set all this up. I mean between the Ministry, the Death Eaters and Dumbledore there are certainly enough people who probably want you either dead or spilling your secrets."

Narcissa face broke into a predatory smile, "Oh I did take the precautionary measure of reminding Dumbledore and the Board of Governors of certain embarrassing secrets which just might find their way into the hands of the Daily Prophet, the Quibbler and various international papers if I should have failed to return to Grimmauld Place. I did tell you, my lord, I do know many secrets."

Harry smiled, "Great! I want you to keep up the good work or I'll have to punish you again."

Sally looked up from rubbing Jacob's tummy which was causing the baby to happily coo and giggle, "Well can you make sure you punish her someplace other than on the kitchen table next time? I thought my eyes were going to catch on fire when I came down to breakfast the other day!"

The group all shared a wicked laugh at that image. Harry and Narcissa had been properly embarrassed by being caught having kinky S&M sex. Luna, however, had serenely pointed out to Sally that house discipline had to be maintained and Narcissa had been

bad. Sally had marveled at how calm Luna had been while explaining this considering she was naked and busy using a cat-o-nine-tails made of knotted silk on Narcissa. That Luna could do this so calmly while Narcissa was busy impaling herself atop of Harry (while practically screaming in lust) was something Sally still couldn't fathom. Sally herself had been torn between running away from embarrassment and joining in considering the erotic feelings which suddenly had begun to wash over her.

Of course the trio's embarrassment hadn't stopped them from continuing and Sally soon found out why she was alone on the second floor. After the orgasm ripped through her, Sally was at once sad for missing out on more but was grateful her son wouldn't be subjected to it. Who knows what a rush of such emotion would do to her little angel!

"Yeah, what is up with you and kitchen sex, Harry? Going to try and break in all the tables in the Great Hall?" Lilith asked with a grin. After hearing the story from her best friend Lilith had cursed up a storm in private that she hadn't been there to participate! After their time in the shower, Lilith wouldn't mind another round with Narcissa. Plus Luna's bit of kink sort of intrigued her!

"I doubt the house elves would allow it so I don't think you have to worry." Harry said easily.

"I don't know Sally; we might want to wipe down the table a bit before we eat. Who knows where the adventurous Lord Black might have been the night before?" Lilith said to her friend. Both girls giggled and Narcissa couldn't help but also give an amused snort.

Harry gave Lilith a light swat on the bum, "Trying to outdo Luna for being a smart aleck, dear?" Harry leaned in and gave Lilith a quick kiss on the cheek to ensure she knew he was kidding. He looked over to see they were alone in the station. "Well let's go find ourselves a carriage and go face the music, shall we?" The group made their way to over to find the last few carriages leaving. Harry helped the witches in and patted the Thestral on its flanks before joining them.

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Ginny squirming in the seat next to her was starting to get on Hermione's nerves. The Headmaster had made a surprise announcement during breakfast about a special feast being put on for the evening and all had to attend. Ginny was sure it had to do with Harry coming back. Hermione wasn't so sure since she couldn't see Dumbledore wanting to make a big deal about Harry after keeping him locked up after the incident on the train. Of course there was the fact that Harry was an emancipated adult and head of three Houses so there might not be anything the Headmaster could do about it.

Hermione had stayed up well past curfew after they had been unable to see Harry the night he was attacked by Death Eaters. She had reviewed the possible genealogical ties regarding Harry as well as trying to find all she could about House Peverell. She had also continued to try to get more information out of Luna. So much so that even Parvati had commented she was practically badgering the poor girl.

Hermione snorted to herself; as if the blonde girl seemed to even acknowledge any of her questions when Hermione had been able to track down the elusive Ravenclaw. Luna, Hermione had found to her sorrow, had an effective way of turning questions back upon the asker. In trying to find out more about Harry and possibly how exactly Luna knew Harry's bed was so lumpy, Hermione felt afterwards like she had been the one being interrogated. Luna continued to tease her over her obvious desire for Harry because of her continued probing for information which Hermione felt was downright ludicrous. Harry was her best friend and that was that!

The sound of the doors of the Great Hall opening and the collective gasps of the students brought Hermione back to the present. As she stared at the sight of Harry leading a large group of students into the Hall she struggled to categorize what she was feeling. It was Lavender who voiced what a lot of the girls at the table seemed to be thinking if the looks on their faces was any clue.

"Oh my...now there is one tasty dish!" Lavender said with a catch in her voice.

Hermione noticed how many of the girls in the hall seemed to be looking at Harry like they wanted to eat him. She wasn't surprised all things considering. His school uniform was obviously professionally

tailored out of the finest material which was framed by a robe that bore the crests of his three Houses instead of that of Gryffindor. Only his tie showed his Hogwarts House affiliation. He wore stylish new glasses and his shoes practically shone. His previously unruly mop of hair was gone and in its place was the long luxurious hair Hermione had seen that night in London. What a difference there was seeing him clean and rested though! Harry seemed to radiate an air of confidence as he strode up to the head table.

Behind him Hermione saw two girls in Slytherin robes herding a group of what were obviously First Years to the front of the group. Hermione realized that the rest of the group was all the students who hadn't been able to return this year to Hogwarts because of the problem with their scholarships. Among them were Sally-Anne Perks and Lilith Moon who were waiting in the back with Narcissa Black who had a baby in her arms. Hermione couldn't help but notice the tension that flashed between her and Draco Malfoy sitting at the Slytherin table as they made eye contact. Hermione quickly looked away as she saw the Headmaster stand as Harry stopped before him.

"Headmaster Dumbledore, I bring to you the students as promised," Harry's voice rang out clearly above all the muttering students.

Dumbledore inclined his head. "Thank you, thank you indeed." The old wizard looked out and motioned for Professor McGonagall who was waiting in the wings with the Sorting Hat. "If those returning students could take their seats, I believe we can welcome our newest students into their new Houses."

While the Sorting Hat sang a repeat of this year's song and then proceeded to sort the new arrivals, Hermione found herself rather cross that Harry hadn't come and sat with the rest of the Gryffindors. He merely had stood to one side of the head table and did nothing more than watch and make some covert comments back and forth with Professor Slughorn. Hermione remembered Harry telling her about how Dumbledore had him help recruit the new potions professor before boarding the train back in London.

After the last new student was cheered and applauded into their new Houses, Dumbledore rose and raised his hand for silence, "This truly is a momentous day and one well worth having the elves prepare another Arrival Feast. I wish I had the words to describe

how happy I am but I'm sure the wonderful food will have to do it for me." Around the Hall, the feast food began to appear on all the tables.

"Pardon me Headmaster, but might have a few words before we all tuck in?" Harry's voice again cut through the noise in the hall.

Dumbledore blinked at the request and most of the other professors looked a bit taken aback. All except Snape, Hermione noticed. Compared to his normal sneers, the one on his face could probably win a trophy for most disdain shown in a single expression. However the rest of the staff was clearly intrigued by what Harry wanted to say. Dumbledore hesitated and then motioned for him to speak.

Harry moved up in front of Dumbledore's podium. Hermione noticed how his head was mostly level with the animated owl on the front of it. It reminded her that even sitting on the stool while being sorted their First Year, Harry's head hadn't been that high. He had certainly grown into himself in the time since then!

"Fellow students of Hogwarts, I just would like to clear up some things. I'm sure the Hogwarts rumor express has been busy since the fight in London the other day hit the papers." This comment brought an undercurrent of murmured comments back and forth since the 'official' story had not mentioned Harry being present at the ambush but there had been plenty of unofficial comments off the record that placed him there. It had been a hot topic of conversation at Hogwarts ever since. Professor McGonagall had warned the group she had taken to say nothing of what they had seen and for the most part everyone but Ron had complied.

Harry paused till the murmuring died down. "In my time here at Hogwarts the winds of public opinion have blown this way and that in regards to me. One year I'm a good bloke and the next I'm the next Dark Lord to come. So I wanted you all to hear the truth from the source."

Harry gaze went from table to table and almost everyone seemed to feel he was looking right at them. "So you all know I am Lord Harold James Potter-Peverell-Black. I am a fully emancipated adult now and all of the students who came with me tonight did so because I paid for them to be here. Because they are coming to school late, they will be having tutors made available to help them catch up

especially the Fifth and Seventh years who are facing their exams. I don't want to hear how they are somehow getting any preferential treatment because of these tutors. In fact if any of you feel you are having trouble with class, feel free to come see me and maybe we can work you into the tutoring cycle."

Harry turned his gaze to the Slytherin table. "Since I am now an emancipated adult as well as a Lord I shall be staying in my own room. This isn't me being pampered but is what has historically been allowed to emancipated students. It also allows my previous dorm mates to avoid any hint of being favored because they bunked with me. I would like to stress again how I am a legal adult now. Please do not forget this. Circumstances have forced me to become an adult early and take on adult responsibilities and I take those duties seriously. So I would ask you all to forget the Harry Potter you thought you knew. I also ask that some of you need to think very carefully before you act around me since as a Lord your actions will reflect back upon your House. Don't think things are the same as they have been in regards to me. Do not test me on this."

Hermione almost gasped at the sudden menace in Harry's voice. However there were plenty in who didn't have her willpower and again the hall was filled with excited whisperers. Quite a few took noticed at the look of utter hatred on Draco Malfoy's face as well as some of the others at the Slytherin table. Interestingly Gregory Goyle just looked sad which surprised Hermione considering his dad had been one of the identified Death Eater killed back in London.

This surprise quickly turned to annoyance as Ron chuffed next to her and whispered loudly to Seamus, "I told you Potter would show his true colors! Poof's got himself his sweet ride at last. We'll never see Colin in the dorms again!" Ginny elbowed her brother hard in his ribs to shut him up as Harry continued.

"So again I think it best if you all just think of me as Harold Black or Lord Black if you need to be formal about it. I would also like to announce I will be continuing the training I was conducting last year as a sanctioned club. If any of you are interested in joining the Defense Association, please come see me." Harry turned back towards the staff table with a bit of an ironic smile, "I would like to stress this club formation is in no way a reflection on the current Defense teacher."

Snape face was a reflection of the hate on Draco's face, Hermione saw. The fact Harry hadn't told people to see her about being in the new D.A. worried her. Did this mean he was angry with her about stopping him on the train or was he allowing for the fact she might not want to join?

Harry turned back to the group, "I've kept you from the feast long enough. Thank you for your attention." With a formal bow, Harry purposefully strode down the center aisle with a slight pause to give a wink, a friendly point of his finger and smile to both Luna and Lilith as he passed between the Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff tables. Hermione watched as he walked over to where Narcissa waited with Sally-Anne. After a few words he and Narcissa left the Hall with the baby. Sally-Anne, however, quickly walked towards the Gryffindor table.

Before Hermione could even form the words, Ginny called out, "Sally-Anne! I have a spot for you!" Hermione had to admit that not only had Ginny been right about Harry, saving a potential seat for him had been a smart move on her part. Now they'd finally get some answers!

"Thanks Ginny but all of you please just call me Sally," she said as she sat down. She leaned forward and inhaled deeply at the aroma from the food which appeared before her. "Oh how I've missed Hogwarts food these last few months! Especially since I couldn't eat a lot of things in the month or so before Jacob was born!"

Questions poured in from around the table with everyone practically shouting over each other. Finally Neville did shout, "Enough! Let the poor girl eat! You have the rest of term to put her on the rack and interrogate her for Merlin's sake!"

Sally smiled at him, "Thanks Neville!" She looked at the rest of her classmates, most had the decency to look a bit embarrassed. "Look guys I will be more than happy to answer your questions after I get some food in me. It's been awhile since I've had a chance to eat without Jacob interrupting me. I swear that boy is hell bent on keeping me thin the way he makes a fuss every time I want some food."

Ginny piped up, "Sure thing but why just Sally? You've always been pretty constant about reminding people you wanted to be called Sally-Anne."

Sally laughed and then took a long drink of pumpkin juice, "Yes I know. Well my mother was always going on about my name being Sally-Anne. Well she's dead and I legally changed my name to Sally Anne Black the other day."

Hermione went white, "How did that happen? Did you..." Hermione quickly looked down at Sally's hand expecting to see a ring from Harry on it. Quite a few others had the same thought and many gasped at the implications.

Sally looked at Hermione in confusion before it dawned on her why Hermione was so shocked. "Oh Hermione you are so silly! I didn't marry Harry although he is the reason for my name change. When he got me away from my abusive parents, he found as head of House Black that my grandfather Martin Perks was really Marius Black so I'm not really a Muggleborn. Since my parents died when my dad ran a red light and got hit by a lorry, well I figured I'd do better in the magical world as a Black than as a Perks."

Hermione noticed quite a few witches let out a relieved sigh, Ginny and Katie Bell being the two most obvious. Little did she realize everyone else heard that her own sigh of relief was the loudest of them all. Ignoring the knowing looks that Lavender and Parvati were giving her, Hermione pressed on, "So where did Harry and Ms. Black go?"

"Oh they have to talk some school business with Professor McGonagall after the feast so they felt it better to eat in Harry's suite where they can also look after my little angel," Sally replied. "Harry said he'd rather put off seeing you all till he doesn't have a meeting to go to."

Neville looked over to where Lilith was joking with Hannah Abbot and Megan Jones while Susan Bones listened with an intent look on her face. "When did Harry hook up with Lilith? My Gran has it on good authority she was the other witch besides Auror Tonks who Harry was with the night of the ambush."

"That and she was supposedly 'giving my Lord Black some needed comfort' that night according to Narcissa Black." Hermione said. She failed to keep the peevish tone out of her voice.

"Oh he bumped into Lilith at the cloak store I was going to work at over the summer before I found out I was pregnant. After Lilith's parents got killed in a car accident last June, she got hired there instead of me. She says after he was made Lord Black he went on a quite a shopping trip and hers was the last shop on his list."

"I'll say! He certainly cleaned up nice...and with that hair!" Lavender practically gushed. The girls all nodded at the sentiment.

Sally shrugged, "Blame Lilith and Draco's mum for the hair. It was Ms. Black's idea but Lilith talked him into keeping it. Who knows how long it will take him before he doesn't need to use a lengthening charm on it. I mean I never saw his hair ever get longer the entire time I've been at Hogwarts."

Sally dug into her food a bit and everyone else belatedly realized they had barely touched their own food. Of course they found Ron had already snagged a goodly portion of all the food while they were intent on Sally. Hermione couldn't help but wrinkle her nose in disgust as Ron shoveled food in his mouth like he was shoveling coal into the boiler of the Hogwarts Express.

Finally when everyone had eaten their fill Sally was again bombarded with questions. Sally tried to answer them the best she could (without revealing certain things she felt best left unsaid) but she found her answers seemed to just aggravate everyone since she really didn't have answers to give.

Finally she got a bit cross, "Look guys, I wish I could answer your questions but I really didn't see much of Harry. I do have a new-born to look after you know and Harry was usually gone to setting up things for the other Potter Fund students. I think another reason Harry decided to see you all tomorrow is apparently he and Professor McGonagall aren't getting along. So I doubt after his meeting he'd be really good company tonight."

Hermione had to ask, "Sally, did he say anything about the Defense club?"

Sally nodded as she spooned some pudding onto her plate. "Yes he did and I think he's going to call a meeting soon of all the previous members. I heard him mention to Luna how he was going to try to get some of you as additional teachers since he expected more people to join and he couldn't be everywhere at once."

"I hope he doesn't expect me to do anything! I've got enough to do with Quidditch! In fact, he better not think he can just waltz in and expect to have his old position as Seeker back. Ginny is doing a bang-up job!" Ron said through his mouthful of pudding.

"I think, Mr. Weasley, that Harry's position on the team is my decision," Katie said with a frosty edge in her voice. "In fact it is you who needs to do some serious thinking about your place on the team considering how much hassle you are in the locker room. Quidditch is a team sport and you seem to consistently forgot what happens with the team stays with the team."

Ron merely shrugged as he obviously blew off Katie's words but the rest of the Gryffindor team looked anywhere but at their classmates. Ginny blushed especially hard and seemed to shrink in her seat. There were plenty of rumors as to why Ron was being such a git in the locker room floating around the halls of Hogwarts. Hermione was reminded of how the only reason Ron was still on the team was he was only slightly less of a berk than Cormac McLaggen.

Hermione suddenly gave out a gasp and turned to Sally, "How do you overhear Harry and Luna talking? They haven't seen each other since the day before the fight in London."

Sally shrugged by was cursing herself internally. She'd certainly put her foot into it now! "Well if you must know and please keep it a secret but Luna has been sneaking into the Infirmary and using the Floo network there to go see him. I think she's been there the last few nights. Luna is helping Harry with some big plans of his. I know Harry is going to help Lilith with a dream project of hers which has got him excited. Luna is very interested in helping out on this project as well."

Ginny spoke up, "Wait, how did Luna know the Floo address to Harry's house? It's under a Fidelius charm so how did she find out? Hedwig is still stuck in the Owlery even after Harry's threat to sue the school!"

Sally shrugged again, "Don't know and I didn't pry. Most of the time I was either busy dealing with my baby or talking with Lilith when she visited. I've never really been all that interested in a lot of the theories Lilith thinks up so I never really hung around when they were discussing it. She is my best friend and all but I just want to design clothes not study magical biology."

Ginny and Hermione shared a look. Suddenly it was looking like not only had the pretty Hufflepuff spent the night at Harry's but also Luna! Hermione shook her head; she was just overreacting. This was Harry after all. He could barely summon up the nerve to kiss Cho last term so he probably wasn't snogging either Luna or Lilith right? Hermione bit her lip in annoyance at how she couldn't seem to convince herself of this.

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"Okay give it a try now," Harry told Narcissa as he rolled up the tape measure and got up off the floor. The stones he'd been meticulously getting into position had all started to pulse red. He stepped back as Narcissa gave him a nod and disappeared in a pop. After a few minutes she reappeared.

"Oh my!" Narcissa exclaimed. "That trip certainly takes a lot out of you! There is no way I could normally make a jump that far."

"So everything okay back at Grimmauld Place?" Harry asked.

"Yes, Winky was waiting and she said she's made sure the door to the room is locked so no one can disturb the stones. She also said either she or Dobby will check it twice a day to be sure the alignment is still good. The bell tone you set up worked as well." Narcissa replied as they walked out of the small anteroom and back into Harry's "office" where she sat down. She seemed like she was winded after a long run.

"Great! Using the Shrieking Shack sounded like a good idea at first but too many people know the entrance. I would rather not take a chance with you, Narcissa. I'm just glad you knew about these portal stones." Harry said.

The stones in question could be seen through the open door where they softly glowed on the floor forming a pentacle. Narcissa had remembered one of her uncles telling a story about them and had the house elves seek them out. Luckily Kreacher knew of them and was more than happy to tell Narcissa where they were stored. The stones created a portal keyed to those with the blood of House Black. It allowed one to apparate from one set of stones and appear at the other no matter the distance involved. Of course the 'no matter the distance' had never really been tested but it had proven to work within the area encompassing the British Isles.

The beauty of the magic was it by-passed wards so now when Harry or Narcissa wanted to leave Hogwarts secretly they could simply apparate to Grimmauld Place and then off to wherever they wanted to go. Even better anyone could use the portal if in skin contact with one of the Blood. Now Harry wouldn't have to walk out past the anti-apparition wards or use the Floo to leave Hogwarts. Keeping people ignorant of his coming and goings was central to Harry's budding plans.

Harry had been quite surprised, however, to find Kreacher was still alive. When he asked Dobby about it, the house elf had shrugged and said Kreacher's crimes didn't mean his duties to House Black were done. So Dobby kept him trapped in a form of magical stasis so Kreacher was available to be questioned as needed. Even Narcissa had been impressed with Dobby's forethought and complimented the elf. Harry noticed Dobby was getting better about being around Narcissa which was good considering she'd be mostly staying at Grimmauld Place.

Narcissa took a drink of water and leaned over the crib to check on the baby who was still fast asleep. "Well I do think your original plan to clean up the interior has merit if only as a place to meet with people you don't want to bring to Grimmauld Place. You can easily have the Goblins create portkeys to it since you are going to have them clean up the tunnel to the Whomping Willow as well as putting those security wards and traps."

Winky popped into the room, "Does Missus wantz some tea or snacks?" She didn't seem fazed by the trip at all. Harry had already noticed how house elves could pop to and from Hogwarts and never seem tired. This didn't seem to apply to other trips. Dobby, for example, had actually looked tired after returning from a trip to the

Samuel Smith's Brewery up in Tadcaster from London. So much so Harry had regretted having him hand deliver the letter to the desk of the CEO instead of sending it normally via the Royal Mail. Since Tadcaster was about half-way between London and Hogwarts the reason for Dobby's fatigue confused Harry. Just another thing added to the already growing list of things Harry wanted to check out.

Narcissa shook her head, "Just some tea Winky, thank you."

Winky turned to Harry, "Lordz Black, you be needin' to be going to yuz meeting! Yuz be wanting Winky to be reminding yuz!"

Harry smiled at how Winky could be a house elf version of Molly Weasley. "Thank you Winky, I'll be on my way." The house elf popped away to fetch the tea. Harry looked at his watch and noticed Winky had given him plenty of warning. He also took another moment to admire his new watch again. For some reason Harry had always kept his cheap electric watches on while at Hogwarts even after they had stopped working. It was his own touchstone to his Muggle heritage; a reminder that the 'real' world was still out there when he was at the castle.

His new watch was a marvel of Swiss craftsmanship. Since it was all mechanical there was nothing for the ambient magic of Hogwarts to bollix up. It had cost him many a pound but he had been glad to pay it especially since it had the self-winding feature using the motion of his arms as he walked. Now he could check the time without having to go through the three second Tempus charm that required a lot of wand waving for such a simple spell.

Harry looked back to Narcissa who was looking down at the baby. "You seem pretty entranced with little Jacob."

Narcissa continued to gaze at the sleeping child with a look of longing, "Well it took a long time for me to get pregnant with Draco and that after two miscarriages. I never was able to get pregnant again...not that Lucius tried that often. Believe it or not but Draco was a wonderful baby and a sweet boy before he grew old enough to be tainted by my mother and Lucius."

Harry sighed, "I'm sorry you won't have any more kids."

Narcissa snorted, "My lord you really need to stop thinking like a Muggle. You average witch can have children up to age 65 and a few have had them as late as 80. My problem will be finding a new husband. Considering how many people want me dead or captured I might as well be a wanted criminal like cousin Sirius was. Thus the dating prospects for me are a bit low at the moment."

Harry blinked at this. Once again he wondered why Magicals seem to rush into marriage and children right after school when they obviously had plenty of time. Again Lilith's theory seemed to have merit since if witches could breed for so many years, why didn't they? Another question for a later time however. "So are you sure you don't want to come to this meeting?" Harry asked.

Narcissa shook her head, "I would like to but I think it is important that Dumbledore and McGonagall see right away how you are an adult and can act like one. While I should be there as your personal aide I believe it would lead them to think you are just using ideas I came up with. Give a good showing tonight and I can ease back into the meetings."

Harry stood and put on his robe, "Okay that makes sense especially since I could wager a hundred galleons Dumbledore calls me 'my boy' at least four times tonight. I guess I don't mind when Slughorn says it considering I heard him do it to Snape tonight but it does grate on me when Dumbledore does it."

"I'd take that bet if only to get some petty cash," Narcissa grumped.

"Yes, I guess I do need to start pay you now don't I? Hmmm...I wonder has the sex been in lieu of pay or simply for services rendered?" Harry laughed at the glare Narcissa gave him. "Don't worry Narcissa, I'm sure we'll figure something out about your dowry. If anything I'll sue Malfoy for breach of contract considering he allowed himself to become a marked Death Eater. While they might not have seen it that why, I certainly feel subjecting you and Draco to Voldemort's whim goes against Lucius promise as a husband to protect you."

"Well I had better get going before Winky comes back to nag me. No rest for the wicked I guess." Harry pulled on his invisibility cloak. He had no desire to be ambushed by his friends who were probably lurking about. He wouldn't put it past Hermione to already know all

the possible rooms he could be in. From the look on Hermione's face during the Sorting, Harry didn't need Luna's fey nature to predict a bone-crushing hug and then a lecture in his future! Harry was looking forward to it, lecture and all!

Harry carefully made his way to the Headmaster's office. Harry had been informed while he ate with Narcissa how Dumbledore had decided to have the meeting with McGonagall moved to the Headmaster's office. Harry smiled to himself; the Old Man might be worried what would happen between Harry and McGonagall considering the last time they'd been alone together.

His smile grew a bit wider as he saw Sally being followed by a gaggle of Gryffindors. It was obviously she was still being asked about him because it seemed Neville was trying (and mostly failing) to run interference for her to allow her to get back to her rooms in the maternity House. Of course since she had to go grab Jacob it meant his room location would be widely known by the end of the evening. Harry sighed; it was probably stupid to think his private room would stay that way for longer than one night. Of course Sally's room wasn't that far down the same corridor as his suite.

It was good thing he had found a portrait of Isla Black in the Black vaults to use as a door guardian like the Fat Lady did for Gryffindor House. His ancestor's portrait had told him her mother couldn't bear to have her daughter's portrait destroyed after the real Isla had run off so she hid it and only moved it to the Black vaults after her husband had died. He even found a smaller table-top portrait which he had in Narcissa's office back at Grimmauld Place so Isla could hop between them.

He had also found an interesting painting of a waterhole where many magical animals were drinking from. This would allow Isla to enter a portrait in the room to announce guests without Harry having to use a Hogwarts portrait. He didn't trust anything which might be used to spy on him. Harry was, however, looking forward to learning more about his 'other' family from Isla. Of course when he thought about it, Harry knew more about his Black heritage than his Potter one. Perhaps this would change when he finally got a chance to see what the goblins had saved from the Potter vaults. He would hope there would be some portraits among the artifacts.

Thinking about how he needed to learn more about House Potter kept Harry's mind occupied till he stood before the door to Dumbledore's office. He smiled; he could hear Snape angrily complaining about how Harry was supposedly being giving preferential treatment. Obviously Snape's ears didn't work while he was sneering since Harry's words at the feast hadn't penetrated. Harry knocked twice before coming in unasked. He figured Lucius seemed to make a big splash by being a Lord who didn't wait on others so Harry figured he probably should do the same. Harry was surprised to see Professor Sprout and Flitwick besides Snape and McGonagall.

"I am terribly sorry Headmaster, I didn't mean to interrupt a staff meeting but your message did say to meet you here at this time." Harry said with fake sincerity. It was obvious by the angry looks on Flitwick and Sprout's faces they hadn't been warned of Harry's actions tonight. He wondered if the rest of the staff was angry about it as well. He wasn't sure why Dumbledore and McGonagall would keep the return of the Potter Trust students a secret but both Sprout and Flitwick looked quite agitated.

Dumbledore raised his hand to cut off any further words from Snape, "Come in my boy and please take a seat. I'm sorry you thought this was a private meeting but all Heads need to be here tonight."

That's one, Harry thought wryly as he sat in one of the unoccupied chairs.

Before Snape could go off on another tirade (which he obviously had ready) Flitwick spoke up, "Yes we are all here tonight but what I want to know is why we found our wayward students were returning when they walked through the door of the Great Hall! Never mind how much extra work this generates that could easily been prepared for but I for one would have like to have readied my Ravens for a celebration." Flitwick glanced over to Sprout, "I'm sure the Badgers feel the same way."

Sprout leaned forward, "They do and I for one am wondering why all the secrecy? Don't you always say how Hogwarts is the safest place in all Britain, Albus? Any threats to the students would come from outside the school. Keeping the news out of the Daily Prophet I can understand but why keep it from us? What possible reason could you have to keep us all in the dark?"

"Maybe the Headmaster didn't want to give some...slithery students the chance to plan mischief before I arrived," Harry put in. The venomous glance he got from both Snape and McGonagall made him want to grin. He could see McGonagall was still angry with him which proved Harry's earlier feeling about the change in the meeting place.

Again before Snape could explode, Harry pressed on, "Professors if I could be so bold but I was called up here for a reason and I would like to have that business attended to as I have many things on my plate right now. I'm sure you all have much to do as well due to all the returning students."

Snape finally could take no more, "You arrogant little cock-a-whop! You think you can just walk right in here like you own the place and start dictating terms?"

"Why yes Professor, yes I do," Harry replied genially. "Considering how things seem to run in magical Britain, I figure my wealth and votes in the Wizengamot guarantee me all that and more. I mean if Lucius Malfoy can try to kill me and five other students in the very Ministry itself and be out of Azkaban in less than four months, I think I can interrupt a meeting when I was invited here on business."

"Severus, please, Harry is here at my request. Considering his rank and recent contributions to the school I implore you to restrain yourself." Dumbledore interceded.

"Yes, my rank indeed, Headmaster; I would ask if you would refer to me by Lord Black or if you must be informal than please call me Harold. Harry is a name I wish to reserve to those I consider close friends." Harry said with his earlier forced sincerity.

Dumbledore blinked in surprise behind his half-moon glasses and even Fawkes trilled a surprised note. McGonagall, however, severe frown only deepened. "Mr. Potter, regardless of your change in status you will show the Headmaster the respect he deserves. I will not have one of my house be so rude and disrespectful!"

Harry turned to the head of Gryffindor, "Professor McGonagall, I would say 'the respect he deserves' is a relative concept. To you

perhaps he is worthy but considering what I have learned I do not feel inclined to be that polite. However, as a Lord I will abide by our culture's customs. That is to say I will abide about what I've been taught which sadly is very, very little. Plus, on the subject of customs, Professor McGonagall, I would ask that you also refer to me as either Lord or Mister Black." Harry's eyes bored into the cool blue eyes of the elder witch, "I think we all know there is not a lot left for me to claim of my Potter heritage."

The diminutive Flitwick cleared his throat to break the uncomfortable silence that followed Harry's comment. "Headmaster, if there is business to be had let us be about it. Lord Black is not the only one who has much on his plate. I, for one, would like to welcome back the students Lord Black was so generous in returning to us."

"Yes, however this generosity already puts Hogwarts into a difficult position. I floo-called the Board of Governors and they have already refused to pay for the tutors you promised during the feast, Mr. Pot...Black," McGonagall said with a hint of irritation. "I cannot fathom why you did not have Ms. Black bring this up to me when she visited earlier so I could work the problem. Now we are left with a situation of students who are a month behind in their studies with little in the resources to catch them up."

"Really, Professor?" Harry asked with a hint of mockery in his voice. "I would have thought if asked by their House Heads there would be plenty of volunteers to help their housemates catch up. This would allow the staff to concentrate on the Seventh Years. Plus, why limit it to one's own House? Hasn't the Sorting Hat been warning us to unite as a School? I am thinking an inter-house study group would go far towards that."

"Indeed it would," the Sorting Hat said from the shelf, surprising everyone in the room.

Harry leaned back in his chair, turned towards McGonagall and smiled, "The reason I didn't have Ms. Black tell you about the tutors earlier, Deputy Headmistress, was precisely because I wanted to see what the Board of Governors would do. I had hoped they would have jumped at the chance to help students meet the educational standards they have stipulated. Is not the purpose of the Board to ensure that Hogwarts educates students to standard? I had Narcissa Black, who by the way is now my personal aide, do some

checking and there is plenty in the discretionary budget to cover the cost of the tutors. One can only guess why the Board doesn't feel the need to spend the money. I for one guess that perhaps the blood status of the students in question is the only limiting factor."

Harry stood and walked over to a Wizing picture of the Tri-Wizard champions taken prior to the First Task. He tapped his finger on the picture. "I was rather amazed to find that even with Hogwarts hosting the first Tri-Wizard Tournament in over a century that none of the monies to pay for it came from the budge overseen by the Board. Further digging found not a galleon came from any source in the Ministry."

Harry turned and glared at the Headmaster, "I must applaud you Headmaster on your financial skills considering you were able to hold the entire tournament without tapping into any known source of income. I would go so far to say you might give the goblins a run for their galleons."

Snape spoke up with his characteristic sneer, "Headmaster, I ask what all of this has to do with us? I have far better things to do than listen to 'Mr. Black' cast aspersions against you or the Board."

Before Dumbledore could speak, Harry quickly closed the distance between him and Snape. "Yes I'm sure you are busy collecting information and making reports back to your Master." Harry suddenly reached out and grabbed Snape's left arm, jabbing his right index finger into the startled man's forearm and hissed out a command in Parseltongue. Both Snape and Dumbledore went white as the rest of the professors looked on in confusion.

Harry's green eyes bored into Snape's. "Just so you know where I'm coming from, Professor, I know exactly what it took to get your little bit of body art." Harry leaned forward and whispered into Snape's ear, "Do you still think fondly of the screams Sarah Underhill made as you raped her before your Dark Lord? Do you remember all of her blood on your hands after you killed her? Do you wank off to the memory, you sick bastard?"

Snape leapt to his feet with a curse, knocking his chair down in the process. His wand was out and centered on Harry's chest although it was shaking so hard a spell would have been hard pressed to actually hit Harry.

As he had done at the start of term, Flitwick's wand was out and with a flourish Snape's wand was in his hand. "Severus...Lord Black...what is the meaning of this? Can't you two be in the same room without trying to kill each other?" the Charms professor cried out.

Harry turned to Dumbledore who was still very pale and staring at him like he was a Muggle who had seen a ghost. "Professor Flitwick makes a good point; I can hardly duel Professor Snape without my wand. I certainly won't do very well in class Monday morning without mine. I think it is high time you give it back...and my owl."

Harry had managed to convince the aurors after the Death Eater ambush that he had been using Narcissa's wand since he didn't want it known he had a Peverell wand. Considering Narcissa had been married to a Death Eater, the aurors accepted the idea Harry would feel more comfortable with her not being armed.

In the few seconds that followed no one spoke. Harry merely shrugged, "Okay since this meeting has gone pear shaped let me bring my portion of it to a close. One, I want my wand back and my owl released. For that matter I want you to stop screening my mail or the next letter you receive will be from my solicitor. Two, I have no intention of dueling Professor Snape; I was just making sure he and I had a certain understanding. Three, the tutors will be paid hired through my company, the Isis Foundation. In fact, while they are indeed students, I wanted to come here tonight to let you know all that all of those students I brought in tonight are my hired employees."

The silence continued before finally McGonagall spoke up, "Your hired employees? I don't understand."

Harry smiled to himself. McGonagall's Scot accent only came out when she was confused or really angry. "It is very simple Deputy Headmistress, they are my employees. Currently they are being paid to continue their education so they can be of better use to my Foundation. If you read the Hogwarts charter, companies are allowed to do this as long as they pay for it. While I felt it more traditional to keep them in their previous Houses, my employees can if I wish be moved to their own house. I'm thinking a Grim would be an appropriate symbol for that house in honor of Sirius' memory.

However I feel pulling them out of their current Houses would further alienate them from the Wizarding culture we are here to learn. I would ask, however, since they are my employees if there are discipline problems to be addressed that I be informed. I'd rather have a chance to work the problem before any potential expulsion happens."

Harry turned to Professor McGonagall, "Now normally I would be expected to also pay for this privilege. However considering the current level of finances available to the Board I will take the matter up before the Wizengamot if they try to force the issue. I checked and all the resources needed to feed, teach and house my employees were already budgeted prior to the end of last term so it is obvious they won't be a burden."

Harry returned his gaze to Professor Snape, "I will, however, not take kindly to any harassment of my employees relative to their blood status. I have already briefed my employees to come to me with any complaints. I will take such complaints up with the Head of the House of the offender. However, if the situation is not resolve to my satisfaction, I shall take matters into my own hand." Harry turned to the Headmaster, "I would hope that my performance in London both in June and last week shows that I do mean business."

Harry looked at his watch and exclaimed with obvious fake surprise, "My word, look at the time! I'm sure you all have much to talk about. So Headmaster...my wand?" Harry asked with his hand outstretched.

Silenced reigned again as Harry continued to gaze at the Headmaster. Dumbledore gave a quick glance to McGonagall before closing his eyes for a moment before sighing, "My boy, you put me in a delicate position."

That's two! "How so Headmaster? You have my wand. It is my property taken from me as a minor. As an adult I would hope I wouldn't have to bring legal actions to have it returned. Besides I don't believe Professor Flitwick would accept my excuse come Monday morning that I cannot do my in-class work because I didn't have a wand."

Dumbledore sighed again and reached into a drawer in his desk and pulled out Harry's holly and phoenix feather core wand. Harry felt a

bit of a thrill of magic as he took it from the old wizard. Of course the beauty of it was he'd only use this wand for class and his other wand for other purposes so a Prior Incanto spell would be useless.

Dumbledore seemed to be trying to regain his composure and some semblance of control of the meeting. "I'm sure the Board will give you no trouble, my boy. I for one am very grateful you have brought our wayward students back to school. I do hope, however, you shall restrain yourself from any theatrics. After the incident on the train we've had some problems between Slytherin and Gryffindor Houses."

Three! Harry bowed his head, "Headmaster regardless of what your Defense teacher might think, I have never sought the limelight and wish nothing more than to be left alone. If trouble does not seek me out, then there will be no trouble at all."

Harry turned to Professor Flitwick, "I would ask, however, that perhaps later in the term Professor Flitwick could help with dueling customs for the Defense Association. I'd rather have the club learn from someone who has been formally taught these rules than by me who only has read about them."

Dumbledore nodded, "I'm sure we can see how it can be worked into the schedule my boy."

Harry bowed, "Then I believe I shall take my leave." Harry walked to the door, "Oh and Headmaster?"

Dumbledore looked at him suspiciously, "Yes?"

Harry's face broke out into his usual lop-sided grin, "I am not your boy and if Narcissa had any money to her name she'd owe me 100 galleons. Good Night!"

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Harry's good mood lasted only a few minutes. He had forgotten to put his cloak back on before heading back to his room which turned out to be a mistake on his part. As he passed Professor McGonagall's office he heard a male voice call his name. Harry turned and he let out a dejected sigh. One of the last people in

Hogwarts he wanted to talk to was striding toward him with his typically superior look on his face.

"What do you want Smith?" Harry asked as he kept walking toward his quarters.

Zacharias Smith was obviously taken back by Harry's tone but he covered it well as he hurried to keep up with Harry. "Lord Black it is more what I can do for you. I wanted to set up a meeting between our two Houses so we can agree on terms before having the Banns posted."

Harry blinked. He didn't just hear what he just thought he did...did he? "I'm sorry Smith; it has been a busy day so I'm not sure I heard your right. You want to set up a meeting for what exactly?"

Smith's face shifted briefly from stuck-up to sneer before he got himself under control. "The meeting is about going over dowry rates and wedding details between myself and Sally-Anne of course. Now that she is of House Black and has no living parents, those negotiations fall to you."

Harry felt a coldness coming over him. It was the same feeling he had had as Draco had taunted him about Sirius' death back on the Hogwarts Express. "Your wedding to Sally-Anne." Harry said slowly.

Smith's face shifted to a look of annoyance. "Of course, Lord Black, who else would I be marrying? Now my family feels the sooner the meeting the better so as to..."

"Just stop!" Harry interrupted. Harry looked around and noticed where they were and pulled Smith into a empty classroom. Just as he remembered it was the one he and Hermione had used when she had been helping him with spells for the First Task back in Fourth Year.

After slamming the door shut, Harry turned back to Smith, "Let's back up a moment so we both are on the same sheet of parchment here. Due to dubious circumstances you get Sally pregnant. While not your fault, you refuse at first to acknowledge the baby as yours till a test proves it. Then you drop Sally like she has a disease. When she tries to get some sort of support, not marriage mind you just support, you sic your family solicitor on her. From what Lilith told

me House Smith wasn't going to 'pay for some mudblood's bastard' which tells me that somehow Sally's supposed blood taint means more to House Smith than your own blood does. I'm sure you so proud," Harry said coolly. "So Sally has to go back to her abusive parents till I rescue her. I think that is a pretty accurate summation of the facts which leads me to ask where the fuck do get off thinking you are going to marry her?"

The stuck-up look on Smith's face slid off to be replaced with anger mixed with a hint of fear. He took a deep breath before going on in an annoyingly ingratiating tone, "What my family wanted me to do and what I had wanted to do, Lord Black, was two different things."

Harry snorted, "So you avoided Sally like the plague while she was still at Hogwarts because you were defying your family? Pull the other one, Smith, because I'm not buying it. If you really wanted to do right by Sally and show some real Hufflepuff loyalty you could have been giving her morale support till the end of term. You certainly could have kept up corresponding to her after she left school. Now I'm to believe you want to not only marry her but you also want House Black to pay you with a dowry for the privilege?"

Smith couldn't meet Harry's piercing gaze, "I have my position as the heir of House Smith to think of. I can't always do what I please and so often have to do things I may not wish to. House Smith looks to my father as it shall someday look to me. Just as I would hope my children and relatives will obey me, I too need to obey my father."

"Ah yes, the old 'it was for the good of the House' excuse. Do you know how many Blacks were cast out or made to do things they despised for the good of House Black? It sickens me how you supposedly Noble families kick people of their own blood into the street rather than risk the hint of scandal. Sally's grandfather was kicked out simply for being a Squib. Doesn't matter that a Squib can go on to do many things like potion brewing or other important tasks that don't require a lot of magic. Nope, blood ties or not, out the door he went." Harry said with a sneer.

Smith straightened up and his previous haughty look returned. "Be that as it may, Lord Black, the fact remains Sally-Anne gave birth to my child and House Smith is formally requesting the wedding. By custom and law, we have the right to force the issue if we have to. I

would rather not have it come to that but this is my son we are talking about."

Harry's eyes practically bugged out and the cold feeling he had been feeling went from chilly to arctic. "Your son? YOUR SON? You miserable bastard! How dare you even think to lay any claim on Jacob! Do you know what Sally's parents did to him to say nothing of her? You didn't see how they beat her! You weren't there to see what mind games they played on her. You certainly weren't there to protect 'your son' when his grandfather was burning him with cigarettes as punishment for crying too much! If anything Jacob is MY son now because he's a Black and a Black he is going to stay for now. Hell now that I think about it he could be considered my..."

All emotion drained out of Harry's face as his voice trailed off. Fear crept down Smith's spine at the sudden feeling of menace Harry seemed to be radiating. Even though Harry was just standing there with a thoughtful look on his face, Smith could not help but think of an animal ready to strike.

Harry suddenly gave a odd, barking laugh which seemed to have genuine amusement in it as he looked at Smith with an seemingly pleasant smile on his face. "Okay, I was a bit thick there for a moment but I know what is going on now. Sorry I'm new at this House politics business but I see where House Smith is coming from."

Smith couldn't help but give a sigh of relief. For just a moment he had felt actual fear that Harry might attack him. "That is good to hear; when would you like the meeting between our two Houses to be?"

Harry laughed again but this time there was no warmth in it, "Oh there isn't going to be a meeting. I just know what is going on now. When Sally was just some nameless Muggleborn she was probably just a shag to you. That's okay since I am sure she was just doing the same. You two did more than most to keep her from getting pregnant. If it hadn't been for the Twins being utter berks, none of this would have happened. Yet after she did get pregnant why you and House Smith wanted nothing more to do with her. Now however..."

Smith didn't like the look on Harry's face so he smoothly interrupted, "...now has nothing to do with it, Lord Black. Jacob is my son and I assure you I've been tirelessly working on my parents to claim him."

"Oh please, you pompous bastard, don't even try to fucking go there. I know exactly what this is about. Jacob is now an official Black. Moreover he's a male Black. Considering what happened at Gringotts the other day, I'm sure the current state of Black lineage is well known. If I should die fighting Voldemort, then that leaves Draco as the next head. If he should die as well, and considering I almost killed him last month that is a real possibility, then little Jacob would be the heir to House Black. So tell me, Zacharias Smith, why shouldn't I see your request to marry Sally as nothing more than a ploy by your House to add the Ancient and Most Noble House of Black as practically a client house to House Smith? What a coup that would be!"

Before Smith could deny it, Harry's wand was out and pointing at the now trembling teen. "You don't give a shit about Sally or your son! This is all just a power play by your House. Plus how can I not see it as a threat? If you marry Sally then it is in your interest for both Draco and I to die so forgive me if I take that threat very seriously."

Smith raised his hands as if in surrender, "No! It isn't like that!"

"Then what is it like, Smith?" Harry snarled. "Ever since I first set foot in Diagon Alley I've seen people like you and Draco judge people because of the supposed merit of their blood. My mother was considered a mudblood even though she was one of the best students at Hogwarts in generations. At the time her accomplishments were all but ignored because of her lack of so called pure blood. Now that it has come out she is descended from Isla Black, I'm sure all your pureblood relatives we'll be saying, 'oh that explains it' as if suddenly finding an ancient relative connection has anything to do with my mother's achievements!"

The anger boiled up out of Harry and he suddenly lashed out and back-handed Smith in the jaw causing the startled Hufflepuff to fall to the floor. "Did you think I didn't hear all the snide comments you made about Hermione last year in the D.A. meetings? Every time she shines, people like you always have an excuse. You're just as bad as Draco and all the other Slytherins! I'm sick of it! Sick of all your petty bigotry!"

Smith rolled over and wiped the blood from his nose. Before he could even think of whether to respond angrily or beg for mercy Smith felt something take hold of him and lift him into the air. Smith shuddered at the look in Harry's eyes as the Gryffindor looked up at him.

Harry lifted his wand, "Do you know what I don't understand, Smith? Whatever possessed the Sorting Hat to put you into Hufflepuff? You are about as loyal as Peter Pettigrew was brave. Maybe all the Hat had to work with was your loyalty to your own House...which to me just is another way of saying you are too gutless to do what is right over what your House wants."

The wand in Harry's hand began to move in an intricate pattern Smith had never seen in any class. His body began to tingle.

"Little Jacob is your son by blood and yet all you and House Smith could see was somehow that beautiful little baby was somehow diseased because of his mother's blood. You turned your back on your own son calling him a mere mudblood bastard. You turned your back on your own child. You are just as bad as Sally's parents and let me tell you something Smith; before I allowed them to die they suffered for that crime."

Smith tried to speak but found his body couldn't move. All he could do was make pitiful squeaks as the tingling feeling turned into a painful nausea and an ache throughout his body.

Harry finished up whatever spell he was casting. "You know Smith; they say blood is thicker than water. I'm betting that mud is thicker than blood. Enjoy your stay in Hell, you bastard."

Smith watched as Harry abruptly turned and left. Pain was welling up in him and the last impression he had before sight failed him was the world turning muddy brown.

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HEADMASTER'S OFFICE, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th – EARLY MORNING

Harry was rapidly getting a headache from all of the shouting and arguing and finally snapped, "Excuse me Headmaster, I must ask again why am I here?"

Dumbledore and the four House heads looked at him a bit incredulously. It was McGonagall that finally spoke up, "You know full well you are here because you are the most likely suspect to the brutal murder of Zacharias Smith! I know it is late but I would think the seriousness of this meeting wouldn't be lost on you!"

Harry yawned; he wasn't trying to be a berk it was just he was really tired. He had only gotten about an hour or two of sleep before being woken up and told to report to the Headmaster's office. This time, however, he had Narcissa with him. She wasn't looking very pleased by the late hour either.

"Exactly, Professor, which is what I'm trying to point out. Why am I the most likely suspect? From what you've told me is some portraits saw someone who looked like me talking to Smith. Then you tell me that Zacharias was killed by having his blood transformed into mud in some empty classroom before being found by house elf who showed up to clean it. What I want to know is why you all just seem to have concluded I'm guilty just because I supposedly was the last person to seem him before he was murdered?"

Even Snape was speechless at Harry's words. Before either him or McGonagall could respond, Narcissa spoke up, "I can see by the looks on your faces you have indeed already concluded from the slightest of evidence that Lord Black is guilty. I think what Lord Black is asking is why after all he's done for the school you are so readily able to consider him guilty when there are far more reasonable theories."

Harry nodded, "My point exactly! I have plenty of enemies and now that I'm the head of three Houses I'm sure I have more I don't even know about yet. So what better way to go after me then frame me for murder?"

Snape gave a contemptuous laugh, "Your attempts to shift blame elsewhere is pathetic 'Lord Black' considering you were seen with the boy, you have the motive and you already tried to kill Draco Malfoy just last month."

"Don't forget all those Death Eaters I killed the other day," Harry said with more than a hint of scorn. "I also killed Quirrell when he was possessed, a basilisk and I would have killed Bellatrix as well if Voldemort hadn't shown up. The point I'm trying to make is the only evidence you have is someone who looked like me was the last one seen with Smith. Considering how Barty Crouch Jr. was here for all of my Fourth Year disguised as Professor Moody, I do not understand why what the portraits thought they saw is somehow conclusive evidence of me being a murderer."

Harry turned to McGonagall, "Plus by using the Occam's razor principle that Luna Lovegood is so fond of, I have to ask exactly how did I murder Smith? Turning blood into mud? I wouldn't even know where to start with that. I mean would you transfigured some of the blood and then add some sort of self-replicating Protean charm? I don't think that could even work and off the top of my head is the only way I could see to do it."

Harry looked at each Professor in turn as he spoke, "From what I've learned so far in my mere five years of classes with the Deputy Headmistress, partial transfigurations are the hardest and we don't even really get into that subject till late in the sixth year. Since the magic used is beyond any Sixth Year by Occam's principles, I can't be the killer. So by what logic am I the best suspect for the murder? Seems to me based on the evidence, a better theory is someone has managed to sneak into Hogwarts with all the new students and then disguised themselves as me to murder Smith to frame me."

Harry's voice grew cold as he turned back to the Headmaster, "What bothers me about all this is what happen to Sally Black is being used against me as proof I murdered Smith."

"Why shouldn't it? Her parents died mere hours after you went to their House? Now Smith is dead. Revenge is the obvious motive." Snape said.

Harry shrugged, "Considering how angry the Perks were when Sally and I left, I'm not surprised he ran a red light. He was probably trying to get to his solicitor's office before they closed since he threatened to sue me for every pound I had. Again I'm being blamed for something which happens to thousands of Muggles every year without any foul play being involved."

Harry turned toward McGonagall, "What I want to know is why Sally was allowed to be abused in such a way in the first place. She can't come back to Hogwarts and so she's just allowed to drop out of existence? The Purebloods go on and on about the dangers of the Muggle world to Magicals yet no effort at all is made to keep track of Sally or even perhaps ask her if she wanted to come live with some other house? Do you think so little of your Lions, Professor that you couldn't do something for Sally?" He turned to Sprout, "The same could be said of you Professor; where was Badger Pride when Lilith's parent's were killed and she and her brother could barely make ends meet? She told me how no one from Hogwarts ever wrote. So much for the vaunted Hufflepuff loyalty!"

Sprout looked down in shame but McGonagall gave Harry an icy stare, "It is not my place as Deputy Headmistress to act as nursemaid to the Muggleborns of Britain no matter what my personal feelings are."

"Oh I disagree with you there Professor," Harry said returning the icy glare. "I found some interesting material back in the Black library. Some go back to Salazar Slytherin himself. Did you know Salazar actually wasn't against Muggleborns but only felt they needed to be taken away from Muggles and raised in the Wizarding world? Considering a lot of the problems wizards and Muggles were having back then it makes perfect sense. He never said that wizard blood was better. He felt that the 'pure blood' which is to say magical blood create a bond between those born in the magical world to those born to Muggles. Slytherin felt Magicals had a duty to the Muggleborn to protect them. All this later Pureblood ideas came much later and I'm betting got worse under Grindelwald."

Harry tapped the Black House crest on his robe. "You know the Black family motto 'Toujours Pur' and how it means always pure? It originally had nothing to do with blood. It was felt by the original Blacks that those who use magic with a pure heart or intent can cast stronger spells than those who use magic for their own selfless ends. 'Always pure' meant having a pure heart. One with a pure heart would not turn their back on someone who simply couldn't pay tuition anymore."

"So yes Professor, I do think it is in Hogwarts interest to look after the Muggleborns since obviously people in the Ministry aren't doing it. I feel this especially important considering how Muggleborns are

the preferred targets of the Death Eaters. I've always heard how you and the Headmaster have always stood up for the Muggleborns. I guess I didn't realize that only applied to those currently going to school." Harry said as he ignored the furious look on McGonagall's face as he practically dared Dumbledore to contradict him.

Seeing how the Headmaster refused to be baited Harry turned back to McGonagall, "I can understand how I was abused both mentally and physically by my relatives thanks to our dear Headmaster's machinations but Sally could have easily been spared the pain and anguish if you had taken the time to look after one of your own. I simply cannot believe someone like the Diggles or the Bones wouldn't have done something. Hell while she could never replace Cedric I am sure Amos and Cecilia Diggory would have been happy to take her in" Harry said defiantly.

McGonagall gave a sniff, "I don't even know why we are discussing this Albus; we need to call the Aurors and let them handle this." Harry couldn't fail to notice how McGonagall totally ignored his point about Sally.

Dumbledore shook his head, "Now Minerva we need to control this situation before the wrong impression gets out."

Narcissa laughed, "Wrong impression? You have a murdered student in your school Headmaster; no amount of spin is going to keep the Daily Prophet from having a field day with this. Which helps prove my Lord's point. The Minister has been painting Lord Black as a menace since June and now there is this murder? It will certainly fan the flames of rumor and innuendo. I think you all are far too quick to judge him guilty. I find myself wondering why? Did he not defeat the Dark Lord in his First Year and again in his Fourth and Fifth? Did he not slay the beast inside the Chamber of Secrets? You take one incident when my Lord was distraught and goaded by my son into rage to accuse him of murder?"

Professor Flitwick spoke up, "I have to agree with Minerva. It matters not whether Lord Black is innocent or guilty for it isn't our responsibility to make such a judgment. We need to contact the DMLE and let them handle it. To do otherwise will make it look like we are trying to cover something up or interfering with the investigation. Ms. Black is quite correct in how the press would use

that against both Lord Black and the school. So let us contact the aurors as quickly as possible and let them do their job."

Harry gave a happy sigh, "I agree; I'm going back to bed then."

The Hogwarts staff looked at Harry as if he had grown another head. Again it was McGonagall that spoke up first, "Yer dinnae gowen anywhere, young man!"

Harry turned to the head of Gryffindor House whose accent once again betrayed how upset she was, "Oh I think am, Deputy Headmistress. The other day I had to school Auror Tonks in the new reality of things. I see it needs to be done here as well." No one saw Harry's wink to Narcissa when he turned to give her a quick look.

Harry began ticking off points on his fingers. "First off, go ahead and call the aurors since I've been saying that since you summoned me up here. However let me remind you all that by custom, as Head of House Black, I am allowed to meet the Aurors at a time of my choosing regardless of what crime I'm accused of just as long as it is within twelve hours of the notification from the DMLE that I am an official suspect. We shall see if the DMLE jumps to the same unsupported idea I'm guilty with practically no evidence to back it up."

"Second, regardless of whether I'm a official suspect or not, I will be questioned. Depending on how the questioning goes will determine what comes next. Now I could volunteer or be asked to give a pensieve reading or even take veritaserum. Yet as it was pointed out to be me by Narcissa on our way up here even then I can have that delayed and even put to a vote in the Wizengamot. Now since I'm new to that body, I'm not quite sure how the votes would play out...but funny how votes like that seem to blow which ever way the wind goes and by wind I mean galleons which I suddenly have a lot of."

"Thirdly a pensieve reading or even veritaserum isn't the end-all, be-all most Magicals on the street think it is. If done properly, if I was the murderer, I could have the memories taken out and stored in such a way as to not remember I did it. No amount of truth potion can make me admit to something I literally have no memory of doing. Narcissa tells me all sorts of people have been doing this to cover up crimes ever since the pensieve was invented. Funny how the

common thief gets 10 years in Azkaban but murderers like Lucius Malfoy get off with a apology for the bother, don't you think?"

"Fourth, a check on my wand is going to show the last spell I cast was the Serpentsortia spell I did back in September since I don't remember doing any magic after that. So unless I had an accomplice to do the spell for me, it does 'prove' I didn't do it. So yes I'm going back to bed because the law, such as it is, is on my side for a change."

Snape face broke into an evil grin, "You've damned yourself, you stupid boy. You practically admit you did it! You just outlined how you could have covered your tracks! By Narcissa as your accomplice, you could easily have murdered the boy."

Harry shook his head, "I admit nothing beyond the fact you better watch who you accuse since I don't take kindly to your base accusation of my aide. I was just pointing out how it doesn't matter whether I'm innocent or guilty; there is really no way to prove it one way or another with any certainty. Or I should say prove it in the magical way. I'm sure if the DMLE actually used Muggle forensics the real killer would be found but this isn't what is used is it? A few spells and the case will be closed. Or would be if someone like Malfoy was involved. Since I haven't had time or the inclination to bribe Fudge I'm betting he'll be on the wireless bragging about how he'll make sure there will be a thorough investigation!"

Harry looked around the room at the incredulous looks on the staff's face. Obviously they hadn't expected this line of reasoning from him! "I'm just pointing out how things are rigged in my favor simply because I'm now an important Lord. Why are you acting surprised I might use the very system that lets real bad guys get away with things? Like I said earlier tonight, Lucius Malfoy could attempt to kill me and five other students in full Death Eater regalia in the Ministry itself and he's already out of Azkaban after only four month! Do you honestly expect me to be found guilty of a murder by the Wizengamot simply because some portraits think I was the last one with Smith?"

Narcissa broke in, "Lord Black brings up a very important point in that he could cooperate fully with the DMLE and even then there will be people like Rita Skeeter who will bring up these very points to show how even if found innocent he could still be guilty. This leads

credence to the more plausible theory this murder was to frame Lord Black because no matter what there is the possibility he did do it or had it done and this might sway public opinion against him."

Harry turned back to McGonagall, "So back to your original question, yes I do think I'm going back to bed and if you would be so kind tell the aurors I will gladly meet with them at nine in the morning. Hopefully we can get this quickly dealt with over the weekend so it doesn't cause trouble come class time on Monday."

Harry paused, "I must say Narcissa brought up a good point. I have literally bled for this school time and time again and yet here you all are practically accusing me of murder on the slimmest of evidence. Funny how students like Draco Malfoy constantly get away with all sorts of things and nothing ever comes of it. Yet when something happens that could easily be a frame-up, it is I who am the prime suspect?

"I find myself asking what a bloke has to do to win a little respect here at Hogwarts? I would think at the very least killing a rampaging basilisk with the Sword of Gryffindor I pulled out of the Sorting Hat when I was twelve would count for something but perhaps that is my youthful naïveté talking." Harry said with his voice dripping with sarcasm.

Harry stood. He took the stunned looks on the staff's face as an indication they weren't going to try and stop him. "Headmaster, Professors I would bid you a good night but I doubt that is going to be the case. Regardless of how I felt about Smith, I certainly wouldn't want anyone to have to die like that. If I think of anything that will help catch the killer I will let you know."

Harry turned and purposely strode out of the Headmaster's office. Narcissa followed him down the spiral staircase, "Well my Lord, I think that went well."

Harry nodded, "Better than I expected. Of course the shock of having someone break the news that I can use the same rules as the bad guys probably had a lot to do with it. Considering how I showed earlier how the world doesn't revolve around Dumbledore's arse probably has left them rather stunned. I'm betting tomorrow we'll hear a lot more about it." Harry turned to Narcissa with a slight

grin, "At least Dumbledore didn't call me 'my boy' once during the entire meeting!"

"Lord Black?" A voice from behind them called out.

Harry turned to see Professor Sprout hurrying after them. "Lord Black, could I have a word with you in private? I assure you this won't take long."

Harry glanced at Narcissa who gave a slight shrug. She moved farther up the corridor but had her wand covertly at the ready. Harry turned back to the head of Hufflepuff House, "What can I do for your Professor?"

Sprout took a deep breath, "Just hear me out that is all I ask." She paused, looked around and with a quick wave of her wand all of the surrounding portraits froze in their frames.

"Neat trick!" Harry couldn't help but exclaim.

"Luckily only Hogwarts staff could do it or else students like the Weasley Twins would have run riot through the school." Sprout said with something approaching a smile. Her face turned serious again. "I know you killed Zacharias." Sprout raised her hand to forestall any denial on Harry's part. "Yes everything you said in the office is true but I don't need magic to tell me what I know. I can see it in your eyes that you did it."

Sprout stopped and looked away for a moment and gave out a sad sigh. With another deep breath she turned back and met Harry's gaze, "I just wanted to thank you for it. I know I should try and do what I can to prove what you did but I can't. Hufflepuff House has always been about loyalty and doing what is right because it is the right thing to do. Throughout history wizards and witches from the other Houses often use all sorts of excuses and rationalizations to condone the evils they do. Not so in our House; there is a common morality which must be abided by. We take our oaths seriously in Hufflepuff House and loyalty to each other is the foremost. So when someone like Smith violates those oaths, justice must be done."

Sprout looked away and stared at a portrait which seemed to portray a meeting of the Hogwarts governor's board from the 16th century if the clothes were any indication. "Like you said, the system is rigged

and Smith got away with stepping away from his responsibility to his child. If he married that poor girl she would probably have end up like so many witches and be dead by her own hand before she was sixty. Under House Smith the child would assuredly grow up to perpetuate those bigoted ideals of the Purebloods."

Sprout looked back at Harry. "I can't condone what you did but sometimes what is right isn't what we want. I spoke to Ms. Moon this evening and what she told me of what happen to that poor girl made my blood run cold. How Minerva could let that happen to one of her Lions is beyond me. You were absolutely right about how I and my Badgers let Ms. Moon down. In the past I pushed for more to be done about the Muggleborns but between the Board and people like Severus it has always been so hard. Worse, ever since the end of the war the Headmaster and Minerva have had compelling reasons why it wasn't 'expedient' at this time to make waves. One can only bang one's head against the wall for so long but that is just an excuse. The truth is I gave up fighting and I have shamed my House because of it."

Sprout's face took on a far-off look. "It has been hard these last few decades and I think I just grew tired when it seemed how even when the forces of the Light won it always seemed to be at a great cost and the followers of the Dark still were allowed to go unpunished and even prosper. It eats at you all the time. I know you and Minerva aren't getting along right now. However I would ask you to remember she lost her entire House in just one night. It took a long time for you to end up the last Potter. To lose so much in one night took a terrible toll on her. I think you reminding her about how easy it is to get away with murder reminded Minerva of things she tries desperately to forget."

"I understand Professor Sprout and I will try to remember that. Regardless of our current problems, I do respect her and she is the head of Gryffindor. Yet her pain is cold comfort to me considering how often I lay in a cupboard under the stairs after a beating, crying to myself and wishing someone would come and save me. Where were you all then? I know Professor McGonagall was against leaving me with my relatives from the very night my parents died. If she was so worried and I was so important in the fight against Voldemort, how come no one checked on me? I know Ms. Figg wrote about the abuse because she told me so. Why is it my relatives where allowed to beat me? I can imagine the reaction to a

Daily Prophet headline, 'Boy-Who-Lived-Beaten' and the outrage which would follow. Since this never was allowed to happen makes me wonder about a lot of things. So pardon me if I'm a bit testy when brought before you all."

Sprout hung her head in shame again, "I guess we all just had grown used to accepting what Albus told us as gospel."

Harry shrugged, "You and the rest of the staff have to deal with that on your own. I for one am not going to let the Headmaster dictate my life anymore. I meant what I said the Headmaster tonight; I'm not looking for trouble but if trouble comes looking for me it better come at me with more than some bigots in stupid masks."

Sprout shivered at the angry feeling Harry was suddenly radiating. What happened to the boy over the summer? He was nothing like he'd been last year and even in the Headmaster's office back at the start of term. She couldn't help but feel the need to get away from it. "Well Lord Black, I have said what I had to say. With the rumors which are sure to come I know there will be many in my House who may believe them. I would hope, however, most of my Badgers will realize Zacharias reaped what he had sown."

Harry smiled, "I hope so Professor; I'm finding your House while perceived as the least of the Four houses holds the best Hogwarts has to offer. I'll take loyalty over bravery, wit or cunning any day. You can't put a price on genuine loyalty or trust."

Sprout nodded, "Indeed! Good night Lord Black and once again thank you for your service to House Hufflepuff."

Harry watched as his Herbology teacher walked away. Narcissa came up as he was pondering the witch's words. "Shall we retire, my lord, before the portraits recover?" Already there seemed to be a shimmer of movement in the frames around them.

Harry nodded. "Yeah, I've had my fill of portraits tonight."

As they walked back to Harry's suite, Narcissa went on in a low voice she managed with barely moving her lips, "I must say Sprout's words were a bit of a surprise."

Harry tried to be as subtle as his aide, "You heard all of that?"

Narcissa replied with her usual mocking smile, "Please my Lord, I am a Black. Do you know how early we are taught lip-reading as well as the spells to help us overhear conversations? I might as well been sitting in your lap. She must have really been rattled if she thought me being a mere four meters away was going to ensure her some privacy."

Harry gave a slight snort, "Narcissa, you keep up with being so useful and I think it will be a long time before you are punished again."

"You could punish me for listening in on your private conversation," Narcissa suggested with a hopeful look.

"I'm sure you'd like that!" Harry said. The pair paused as a group of students could be seen ahead of them. From the looks of it they were coming back from the Astronomy Tower after the night's class. Harry couldn't help but wonder how many students already knew of Smith's death. They waited till the students faded from view before continuing.

Harry sighed. "I don't think there we be much in the way of punishments tonight, I'm afraid. I'm just thinking that by the time my friends finally get to see me they are going to kill me for making them wait."

"Ms. Granger will certainly be put out that you again have to meet with the aurors instead of her." Narcissa agreed.

Harry tiredly ran his hand through his hair. "Yeah, if I don't meet with her soon I'm thinking she's going to have to write her lecture down so she doesn't miss any points."

"I think we should get back to bed my Lord and hope tomorrow is a better day," Narcissa said.

Harry thought about the last look on Smith's face as his spell was taking hold of him. "Oh I don't know Narcissa; I think today was a good day, a very good day indeed."

XxXxX

A/N: To my reviewers, for those who have left more than the normal "Yuz Rock!" or pleas for me to continue (like I'm just going to write 100,000 words and give up) I thank you. I would like to remind everyone to keep reviewing. However, just remember for every person who likes something about the story there is another who hates that very same thing. So in some respects as an author I'm not going to change too much of from my original concepts. Most changes from reviews have been to help clear things I didn't make as clear as I should have and not the over-all plan for the story.

Saint Schools: This is a fanon thing I've seen in many fics. Not only does it give magical kids a place to go if they can't afford Hogwarts, it explains where magical kids go to primary school if they are not home schooled.

St. George's Magical School of England: Located in the Epping Forest bordering London and Essex.

St. Edmund's Secondary School of Magic: In the Lake District in North-West England.

St Andrew's Academy of Magic: Located in the Glencoe region of Scotland.

St. Michael's School of Wizardry: Located near Exeter and covering the South West region of England.

St David's Secondary School of Magic: Near the Ogof Agen Allwedd cave system in Powy in Wales.

St. Patrick's Wizard's Academy: Located in the Slieve Bloom hills near Magherbane, Ireland.

Times: Many of you have commented how much has gone on in such a short amount of time in the story. I don't think it can be helped. Especially since a lot has happened since Harry got to see many of his friends. So until I write out some of these 'reunion' scenes (which are important to the story as you shall see) the story cannot realistically go forward. However I think by chapter 14 or 15 or so we will see things speed up quite a bit. However until then yes it will take me around 15 chapters to get through about a fortnight in time.

Harry/Luna: While Luna is a central character, this is a Harry/Multi story. Unfortunately this website doesn't have a Multi category or I'd change it. So while we will be seeing a lot more of Luna, she isn't the only focus in Harry's love/sex life.

Original Characters: Many of the names of the original characters are taken from other fics. Genevieve Walker is from Clell65619's Harry Potter and the Sun Source, Lucinda Urquhart is a Slytherin fifth year prefect in Radaslab's story, Life Sucks Then You Die. Sarah Underhill comes from JBern's Lies I've Lived. Plus the reason JBern's gives for having Sarah being the one Snape kills to earn his dark mark is probably one of the better explanations why Sirius "pranked" him in a way which would have earned him a messy death at the hands of Remus as related back in Book 3. So I'm going to go with that as part of Snape's back story.

The Isis Foundation: While I do watch Smallville, I had picked the name Isis due to the Goddess' connection to the moon and magic. The Isis Foundation sounded better than the next runner-up name of The Isis Project.

When Neville Met Sally: NO! Just because Neville is being nice does not mean they will get together. Do NOT inundate me with questions about whether or not they are going to hook up!

CHAPTER TWELVE – OF CABBAGES AND KINGS

PRIVATE SUITE WING CORRIDOR, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th
– MORNING

"He's being what?" Hermione exclaimed.

The image of Isla Black wore a sad smile, "I said Ms. Granger that Lord Black cannot see you right now since he is being interviewed by the aurors concerning last night's murder of one Zacharias Smith of Hufflepuff House. It seems Mr. Smith was last seen talking with Lord Black or someone spelled to look like him and thus the Aurors need to speak with him."

"Wow Padma wasn't kidding when she said Harry must have been someone bad in his past life! Life never lets up on Harry does it?" Neville said to Ginny as Hermione just stood there looking at the portrait in shock.

"I know little of such things so I am not sure how long Lord Black will be detained. Due to being asked to come to the Headmaster's office quite late, my Lord was very tired when he returned early this morning and did not give me any instructions. While I am sure he would not mind you waiting inside I cannot allow you in without such orders."

"I can't believe we can't see Harry again!" Ginny said crossly.

"Now Ginny, it isn't going to take all day to have the aurors take his statement," Neville reassured the red-head. "Plus as a head of House Longbottom I can tell you there isn't a lot the aurors can do to Harry today. We might as well leave a message and head back to the Common Room."

Hermione crossed her arms and just glared at the portrait. "I am not leaving till I see Harry and that is final."

Neville put his hand on her shoulders, "Hermione, I know how you feel but please we're both prefects and you know as well as I how much trouble goes on during the weekend. Once the news of Smith's death gets out things are going to get tense again. Remember how bad it was at the beginning of term? I'm betting it is

going to be worse especially with the Daily Prophet still printing all those lies about Harry."

"I don't care Neville; I'm staying till I see Harry. I have to talk to him!" Hermione said defiantly.

Ginny perked up, "Hey Neville, you're head of House Longbottom so can't you use some protocol thing to get us in? Plus, how come you don't have a sweet set-up like this one?"

Neville smiled sadly, "To the first question I could formally ask Isla Black here to announce me but even a formal social call can't trump an auror investigation. To your second question, I don't have my own suite for the same reason Susan Bones doesn't; we both have a living magical relative within one degree and Harry doesn't. While I can change who votes my Wizengamot vote till I turn seventeen there isn't too much else I can do other than formal things in social situations like balls and such."

"Of course even if Director Bones should die even then Susan would only be Lady Bones and not head of her House because she is a 'mere' witch," Hermione said with contempt.

Neville sighed, "You won't get any arguments from me over that. She doesn't need a wizard to tell her what to do. There is no doubt in my mind Susan can probably run her House better than I can run mine."

"Neville you shouldn't be so hard on yourself!" Ginny said exasperatedly.

"I'm not; I'm just saying Susan is tough, smart and she's learned a lot from her aunt. I wasn't trying to say I'm going to let House Longbottom down. I feel much better about myself after our fight back in June especially since I have my own wand now. Harry was right about me; he was always saying I just needed to believe in myself like he always did."

"I'm sure the prefect badge has helped." Ginny agreed.

Neville shrugged, "Well I wish I had been made prefect over Ron last year since it does feel a bit like I'm a prefect only because Ron is now sort of..."

"An arse?" Hermione cut in.

Neville rolled his eyes and Ginny looked sad but neither corrected the bushy-haired witch. Finally Neville went on, "I was going to say he's still suffering from the Cognivore attack but you are right in how he's been acting like a total git of late. I'm worried about when he and Harry get back together." Neville looked pensive for a minute, "Look Gin, if you want to wait here with Hermione that's fine with me but I need to get back. I have to try and derail the Hogwarts Rumor Express as much as I can."

Ginny nodded, "Yeah you're right; I'll come with you." The young red-head looked at Hermione, "Hey Hermione would you at least conjure a chair or something? If you get any stiffer you're going to lock your knees, pass out and you'll end up in the Infirmary!"

Hermione turned with an angry look on her face but this quickly softened. "Sorry Ginny but you're right. I'm just so worked up. I've been trying to just talk to Harry since the start of term and it is driving me mad that I've been checked at every turn!"

Hermione looked at Neville, "I will catch up as soon as I can. Hopefully I can get the real story from Harry so we can do better rumor control."

Neville snorted, "Like that ever works but what else can we do? Once you get the story we need to get it to Luna. Printing Harry's side of things in the Quibbler last year helped so maybe it will work again. Come on Gin let's go fight the evil forces of rumor!"

Hermione turned back to the portrait as the two other Gryffindors left. Seeing that Isla Black was out of her frame Hermione conjured a chair and sat down. The thought of Luna Lovegood didn't help her current mood. Soon enough Isla returned.

"Ms. Granger, I have checked on the proceedings. While I cannot be sure it does not appear that the aurors will be there much longer. I shall announce you when there is a break."

Hermione nodded. She was already lost in thought about the implications of Zacharias Smith's death. She certainly wasn't going to shed any tears over the berk's death. For all that he was one of

Dumbledore's Army he was as much as a pureblood bigot as Draco Malfoy only more subtle about it. The timing of his death was sure to cause rumors especially when more of what happened to Sally-An...Sally got out. She herself had been shocked to hear the abuse Sally's parents had done to her and her baby. It didn't take much to see how Harry could be a suspect in Smith's murder especially considering Sally's own parents died the day Harry went to their house.

Hermione was deep in her own thoughts when suddenly the portal opened and two aurors, one male and the other female, stepped out. She didn't recognize the witch but there was no mistaking Kingsley Shacklebolt. Hermione jumped to her feet, "Auror Shacklebolt, it is good to see you. Is Harry in trouble?"

Kingsley looked down upon the young witch with a tolerant expression on his face, "Hello Ms. Granger it is good to see you again as well. Doubly so considering your injuries you received during the fight in the Ministry. As to Lord Black I am not allowed to comment. However this meeting was an information gathering meeting only; Lord Black has not been formally charged with anything. Whether that might change remains to be seen until we are able to do a much more thorough investigation. Now if you will excuse us, Ms. Granger, Auror Vance and I need to report our findings to the Headmaster."

Hermione blushed as she realized she was blocking the corridor so the two couldn't pass. She quickly stepped aside and watched the two aurors walk away till she heard a small cough. She turned to see Isla Black looking at her.

"Ms. Granger, I have been informed that Lord Black will see you in a moment. He asks you wait till he and his aide finish up some business." With that the portal opened and Hermione practically dove through it as if it might suddenly close.

Hermione was immediately struck by the opulence of the room compared to the typical quarters up in Gryffindor Tower. While the dorms were lavishly furnished they might as well have been a Muggle motel in comparison. She was obviously in some form of waiting room that doubled for a dining area. There were other doors which seemed to imply that as a Lord, Harry got more than just a room to sleep in. From the general lay of the room Hermione was

able to deduce the door to her right probably led to the bedroom which still left three other doors to choose from. One looked like it might lead to a small bathroom for guests while another might be to a wardrobe. This left her with only one choice. Not caring about how she had been asked to wait, Hermione strode over to the door and opened it up without knocking.

She was a bit surprised at what she saw. The room was obviously an office of some sorts. The walls were covered with bookshelves and the room was dominated by a huge desk with two plush chairs in front of it. There was another less ornate chair right next to the door. The desk was a superbly crafted wooden one which looked to weigh half a ton. Sitting behind it in a high back chair was Harry Potter.

Before she could do more than cry out, "Harry!" her headlong rush was abruptly stopped by some unseen force. She tried to struggle but she felt like she was caught in the maw of an invisible vice.

Harry was looking at her with his left hand out like he was offering to shake hands. He had a funny look on his face and was oddly slumped down in his chair.

"Hello Hermione; I guess I shouldn't be surprised you weren't going to wait like I asked. Sorry about the aurors."

"Harry, what is going on? Why can't I move?" Hermione asked as she continued to struggle. It was no use and if anything she felt pushed back towards the chair by the door.

"You can't move because I'm keeping you from moving Hermione. Look, I needed to take care of some business but since you are here you can help me test something. If you agree to just sit in the chair for a few minutes I'll let you go. If not, I'm sorry but you'll have to wait outside till I can explain a few things. Okay?" Harry asked.

Hermione wasn't sure what to think about first. What she'd been asked, how Harry was wandlessly keeping her from moving or what sort of test he might be conducting. Finally curiosity won. "Okay Harry, I promise I'll just sit in the chair."

Harry sighed and closed his eyes for a moment. He seemed to be thinking of something pleasant as a happy look crossed his face. He

leaned back in his chair for a second. As Hermione waited for him to release her she noticed a Wizarding wireless was playing a Brahms piano concerto. Finally Harry gave an odd breathy grunt and leaned forward in his chair bringing his hands together under his chin. As he did so Hermione abruptly fell into the chair beneath her.

"Sorry about that, the test is a bit distracting," Harry apologized.

Hermione was confused. She'd been dreaming and dreading this meeting ever since Professor McGonagall showed up to take Harry up to the castle when the Hogwarts Express had pulled into Hogsmeade back in September. She had played out many ways she felt their meeting was going to be like. Would Harry be angry with her? Would he be happy to see her? None of her scenarios was anything like the distracted teen in front of her.

Hermione looked around the room and tried to figure out what sort of test he could be conducting. The only odd thing she could see was a small golden laughing Buddha statue on his desk. It seemed out of place with the décor. Harry continued to just look at her with his hands linked together under his chin.

"So what is this test all about? You don't seem to be doing anything?" Hermione finally asked in a guarded voice. She wondered where Narcissa was. Hadn't Isla Black said the two were finishing up some business?

"Oh it will become apparent in a moment," Harry said rather noncommittally. He closed his eyes and Hermione saw another odd look cross his face. She thought she heard a weird, wet noise which coincided with the look but she couldn't tell over the sound of the classical music coming from the wireless.

"Okay...so can you tell me why I have to sit here? I don't want to bias the test." Hermione said primly. She wasn't used to Harry being so cagey.

"You're sitting there because I need to test the range of my little Buddha here. I've tested it back at (###) but while there is a lot of magic at (###) it is nothing compared to Hogwarts."

Hermione was intrigued by this since Harry must be talking about his place under Fidelius charm. She was also curious about the little

statue, "What does it do?" It certainly didn't appear to be anything out of the ordinary."

"It helps me control my aura. You see Hermione my fight with Voldemort broke loose a binding on my magic. I've been magically bound since I was two or so and so suddenly I'm working with double the power I previously had. As I'm sure you can understand this has caused me some problems." Harry said with the same breathy, distracted voice.

Hermione's eyebrows shot upwards in surprise. Harry had been at half power all this time? Half power when he had driven off over one hundred dementors as a Third Year? Half power when he had easily outdueled everyone in D.A. sessions? The very idea was mind boggling. It also had other implications.

Harry seemed to read her mind, "Yes I'm having trouble because my body and my magical core aren't synched. I almost killed myself during the fight in London because I was using more power than my body knows how to process. Furthermore my aura broadcasts certain emotions if I'm not careful. That's where this little guy..."

Harry's voice trailed off and he slumped back in the chair and shut his eyes. His hands gripped the side of the desk. He was seemed to be panting.

"Harry are you alright? Are you having trouble breathing?" Hermione asked as she began to get up.

Harry's eyes flew open and with a gesture Hermione might have well walked into a wall. "No! Just stay where you are; I'm fine...nothing is wrong with me. I feel great. Please sit."

Hermione had to admit other than his heavy breathing Harry did look fine and seemed happy. In fact she felt pretty happy herself.

Again Harry seemed to read her thoughts, "So how do you feel? The chair you're sitting in is just around the same distance Lilith and I calibrated back at (###). I'm thinking the range is the same."

"I feel...I feel happy I guess." Hermione was surprised by this considering she had just learned her best friend might be charged with murder in the last twenty minutes.

"You guess? Can you...uhh...be a bit more specific?" Harry said. He was obviously not totally concentrating on the conversation. Hermione wondered if it was because he was doing something with his magic. He certainly had proven he didn't need a wand to push her around!"

"I feel rather exhilarated if you most know. I guess your aura is sort of energizing me or something." Hermione said after a moments thought.

"Or something..." Harry said as he once again leaned back in his chair while gripping the edge of the desk tightly with both hands.

"Are you sure there isn't anything I can do for you Harry? You look like you're about to have a fit!" Hermione said worried in spite of the happy feeling which seemed to be washing over her.

"No...I'll be fine in a second...I just need to...need too...uhhh!" With that final grunt Harry seemed to be having the very fit Hermione was worried about. Harry was twitching and jerking while he made breathy grunts with each twitch. Hermione's concern increased even though Harry didn't seem to be in any pain. In fact he almost looked like he might be...no that was impossible!

After a minute Harry let out a long satisfied sigh and looked up at her and smiled. "So I think the test was a success but just to be sure, how do you feel?"

Hermione was confused. Why did he keep asking her how she felt when it was he was the one who just had a fit? "I feel fine Harry. Still feeling happy if you must know but I'm really worried about you! Are you sure you don't need to see Madam Pomfrey?"

"I don't think Madam Pomfrey would be willing to give Lord Black the treatment he needs, Ms. Granger" said a voice from under the desk. To Hermione's utter astonishment and growing horror, Narcissa Black came up from underneath the desk. She was licking something white and sticky off her fingers. Hermione's heart sank as she watched the older witch snag the last bit of the substance from a spot between her ample cleavage and happily lick it off her fingers as well.

This isn't happening! Hermione's heart was pounding and her blood roaring in her ears. All the evidence suddenly fell into place. Narcissa had been sucking Harry off when she came in! They must be testing whether she could feel what Harry had to have been projecting all the while. That is why Harry kept asking her how she was feeling and why she had to keep her distance! She was certain if she'd been allowed closer she probably would have felt a lot more than just 'happy' the closer she got to Harry.

Narcissa gave an undulating stretch of her shoulders like a contented cat. "If that is all, my Lord Black, I need to get working on that report on the Wizengamot you requested." The older witch glanced at Hermione and gave her a look the younger witch had no trouble interpreting. Narcissa might have well shouted out 'I have had something you want and haven't ever gotten' and it made Hermione's blood boil in jealousy.

Hermione watched as Harry looked up as if he had just realized the two witches were in the room. He began to obviously pull up his pants while remaining seated so as not to flash Hermione. For some reason this irritated Hermione even more! "No Narcissa, that is all. Thanks for the test and remember we need to set up your pay schedule. We can't have you looking like you're my plaything or something."

OoOoO

Both Harry and Narcissa ignored the snort his last comment elicited from Hermione. Narcissa gave a slight nod and left after a soft, 'My Lord' before heading to the antechamber where the portal stones back to Grimmauld Place were.

Harry didn't need legimency to see Hermione was jealous, angry, worried and happy to see him all at once. However it was the anger and jealousy he need to squash as quickly as possible.

"Hermione I want you to do me a favor. I want you to keep quiet and let me talk for a bit. Then you can either leave or give me that bone-crushing hug of yours which I haven't gotten since King's Crossing." Seeing her open her mouth, Harry raised his hand, "Ah-ah! You'll get your turn to speak but I need to bring you up to speed on a lot of changes. Right now if you start speaking, you'll just end up saying

things based on a faulty perception of what is going on. So can you promise me to keep quiet for a minute while I explain thing?"

Harry watched as Hermione obviously struggled with herself. Finally she hung her head and softly said, "Yes Harry, I promise."

"Well then come over here and you don't have to wear that long face. I said I needed to bring you up to speed; I didn't say it was going to be bad."

Hermione looked a bit uncertain but she finally nodded and got up and settled in one of the plush chairs in front of his desk.

Harry smiled at her, "Dobby?"

The house elf appeared in a pop, "How canz Dobby be helping yuz, Masterz Black?"

Before Hermione could speak, Harry's glare cut off her indignant comment. "Can we have some tea brought here Dobby? Would you like some sandwiches or snacks, Hermione?"

Again it was obvious there was a bit of a war going on between Indignant Hermione and the one who had promised to be good; Good Hermione won, "Yes some sandwiches would be lovely, Dobby, thank you." The house elf gave a bow and disappeared.

"Changes, huh?" Hermione asked.

Harry smiled to himself; he knew Hermione wouldn't be able to keep from making some sort of comment about the house elf.

"Changes indeed and my bonding to Dobby and Winky are pretty far down the list of things to tell I am afraid," Harry said as gently as he could. Hermione's eyes got a bit wider at the implications of that.

Harry looked down at his desk and frowned. He had been dreading this moment for days now. He wasn't sure how he could get through this without making things potentially worse. In this case it seemed brazen Gryffindor courage was needed to just tackle the problem head on.

Harry looked up to find Hermione waiting patiently which surprised him and made him smile. "Okay Hermione you have been patient and I am very sorry I couldn't talk to you the other night in London. When I get a chance to tell you what happened that night I think you'll understand how I wasn't in the right mind to see you."

"Why not? I've always been there for you, Harry. You know that." Hermione said gently as she tried to keep the irritation she felt that night out of her voice.

"Yes I do but I wasn't about to try to explain to you in front of Mrs. Weasley how I had just killed around three or four Death Eaters. This on top of killing Peter Pettigrew myself when I spontaneously transformed into my animagus form. Do you really think I wanted to meet my friends when I could still taste the Rat's flesh and blood in my mouth?" Harry said gently.

Hermione's eyes grew wide and she drew her hands over her mouth to stifle the gasp of shock she couldn't help but make. "Oh Harry..."

Harry nodded, "You see? It wasn't that I didn't want to talk to my friends; I just was trying to deal with what happened. Plus I had just been invested as a wealthy Lord, emancipated and then ambushed all in the span of twelve hours. By the time you saw me I was at the end of my rope."

Hermione looked like she was trying to fight back tears. "I...I just...well I was worried you were angry with me because of what happened on the train. Plus you said to have people come to you instead of me in regards to the D.A. and I sort of thought..."

"Hermione stop," Harry interrupted. "I am not angry at you for what you did on the train. It is your job as a prefect. Besides you kept me from killing him." Seeing Hermione's eyes grow wide again Harry nodded, "Oh yes I was going to blow a hole in his forehead right before you stopped me. I probably would have ended up traumatizing those girls in the compartment for life. In fact I really need to look them up and apologize."

Harry looked pensive for a bit and then gave a shake as he tried to focus on the matter at hand. "As for the D.A. that is even less of an issue. I haven't spoken to you since the night at the Ministry and I wasn't sure how you felt about everything. I'm not doubting you,

Hermione, because you are a Gryffindor. However you almost died and I didn't want you to lose face if you decided you weren't ready to be out crossing wands with Death Eaters again. I wouldn't think less of you if you did. Just because I cannot run away from my fate which forces me to fight doesn't mean I need to drag my friends along with me."

Seeing Hermione about to make an indignant protest, Harry raised his hand, "Hold up Hermione, I wasn't saying I didn't think you'd follow me. I just wanted to give you a chance to back away a bit if you wanted to. It wasn't like I thought you'd turn your back on it all. A lot of important work gets done behind the lines. I've found out how much both Neville's and my mother did for the Order and they never went on missions. Luna told me how her uncle's success as a Death Eater fighter came about because her dad was the one doing the predicting and planning. It might not be flashy or get the front page of the Daily Prophet but those support people are just as important."

Harry rubbed his chin a bit and looked thoughtfully at the desk, "Lilith pointed out to me how Susan and Hannah feel I keep too much to myself. In trying to keep all the danger to myself I'm actually putting you all in danger because I'm not leading you like I should. I've also been terribly selfish because I'm not the only one who has suffered. People like Neville and Susan all have their own reasons to fight. Hell, Ron and Ginny certainly have their uncles to avenge. So I need to stop running from the fact I am the one you all look to as a leader. I'm going to need people to help with all it all and so you may easily be worth a lot more working behind the scenes than just another wand at my side."

Harry looked back at Hermione who was looking stunned. "Yes, I've had a lot of time to think on things and look at my life. I told you there have been a lot of changes."

Hermione nodded with a weak smile, "I'll say. Harry, yes I did almost die and I am worried how I might act if the Death Eaters attack me again but I'm not going to back down. I may not have any family members to avenge but I do have my family and friends to protect. I won't let you down!"

Harry smiled, "And you never have. You've always been there for my and I was too stupid to realize you have always been my best friend."

Hermione beamed and looked like she was going to cry again. Harry hated what he had to do next.

"However, my friend or not, things have changed like I said. I've learned things, discovered things which have changed everything. I have found I am at the center of many plots and people I thought friends might be working against me. People I thought I knew are now strangers to me. Dumbledore showed me a copy of the prophecy which was destroyed back at the Ministry so I now know what is ahead of me. I cannot be like I was. Plus with my magic being unbound, I am under pressures I cannot, even if I wanted to, avoid. This means things are not going to be how they were."

Harry focused his aura upon Hermione, lashing her with his resolve. "I will be blunt Hermione, can I trust you?"

Hermione looked shocked and then practically sputtered, "Of course you can trust me Harry! What sort of question is that?"

Harry locked eyes with Hermione and lightly touched her with a legimency probe. He was not shocked to find her natural barriers were strong. Her highly organized mind at work, no doubt. Without probing deeper Harry couldn't breach them without possibly alerting her to the probe. While he knew how to do legimency due to Voldemort's memories Harry had never actually done it so it was dicey to try.

"It is a question I have to ask. I am sorry but I've learned a lot of things about my so called friends that make me wonder about a lot of things which have happened since the first day I set foot in Diagon Alley. Tell me, were you protecting me and my friendship with Ron by never telling me about how he talks behind my back?"

Hermione gave a startled jerk, "Where did you...?"

Harry gave an airy gesture, "How I know is not important. I know a lot of things now which I am not prepared to discuss where I got the knowledge. The important thing is I know them now. So let me ask you this, Hermione, has either Professor McGonagall or the Headmaster ever asked about me or even had you make regular reports on me?"

Hermione went white, "Who told you about that? I've never told anyone!"

Harry gave a sad smile, "No one did, Hermione, it is I just know the Headmaster is keeping track of me and you are the perfect person to do it. Let me guess, you never liked doing it but he convinced you it was for the Greater Good?"

Harry had to fight not to laugh at the look of horror on Hermione's face. "Hermione I am not accusing you of spying on me. If you have a fault it is you don't question authority well. However in this case I am sure you honestly felt you were looking after my well being. So again you were the perfect person for the Headmaster to go too to get information about me."

Hermione looked stricken, "Harry I just gave basic information about how you were doing. Things like how you were doing in school, how you were dealing with things. I didn't give any information out about any of our adventures."

Harry shrugged, "I'm sure you didn't but did you ever think about the fact that the Headmaster is highly skilled in legimency? I'm sure you were looking directly into those twinkly eyes when you did so. Here let me show you something; look into my eyes."

Hermione did so and gasped when Harry projected feelings of trust and comfort at her. "Oh my God, Harry! That feels just like when I'm in the Headmaster's office!" Hermione suddenly looked suspicious. "When did you learn legimency?"

"That wasn't legimency, Hermione, but me focusing my aura on you and projecting a feeling of trust. Those twinkly eyes of his? It is a manifestation of his powerful aura acting on you." See how unhappy this news was making Hermione, Harry couldn't help but prank his best friend. "You can do a lot when you have a powerful aura, Hermione."

Hermione gasped and began to squirm uncomfortably as Harry projected a lewd and sensual vibe at her. "Stop that you prat!" she cried.

Harry grinned, "Don't worry, I only use my powers for good. Seriously though, you may have thought you were protecting my

secrets but the Old Man was probably rummaging around your memories with you being none the wiser. This is what I mean about trust, Hermione. There is a lot of things I will not be able to tell you unless you completely stop reporting the Headmaster. That itself is suspicious and I'm sure he or McGonagall might pull your prefect badge if you did."

Hermione looked sad for a moment before looking up in alarm, "If that is true Harry, what are we going to do about this conversation? If the Headmaster is reading my thoughts, which I'm not sure I believe that he does mind you, then he'll know that you know."

"No worries, Hermione, because before you leave you are going to have a special obliviation done on you. Sadly we can't do it every time but it will make you remember enough of this conversation on a subconscious level so you will better understand why I'm doing things but not enough to alert the Headmaster." Harry said smoothly.

Hermione tensed, "Do you honestly expect me to allow Narcissa to obliviated me?"

Harry shrugged, "Hermione lately I've had to school a lot of people, to include the Headmaster, in the new reality of things. There are things that one can change, things that one can endure and things that simply are whether you like them or not. Sadly this falls under the latter. Let me ask you this; do you honestly think you can prevent me from having Narcissa obliviated you?"

Hermione blinked at this. Harry just sat quietly and looked at his friend with a neutral expression. He felt this was a critical juncture in their relationship. The seconds ticked by as they sat there looking at each other.

Finally Harry spoke up, "You see Hermione I'm now in a position where there is a lot of things I have to do. Things I may not want to do but I can't avoid them. I don't want to have to have you obliviated but it has to happen."

Hermione face became bitter, "Just like I'm sure you couldn't avoid having Narcissa suck you off this morning."

Oh boy, here it comes, Harry thought to himself. Somehow he knew the sex thing was going to be the biggest thing between them.

Funny one would expect the trust issue to be the thorniest problem but Hermione had always been rather prudish. This was an area where he was going to just have to drop the bomb on her like he had to do with Tonks.

Harry nodded, "Yes actually that is a perfect example of things I might not wish but I have to live with. I don't know how much you have read up on magical cores and our auras. Having my core bound while I went through puberty is a serious problem. Like I said earlier, I almost killed myself by using more magic than my body can handle. I now have to try and synch my body to my magic and do what is normally done over the course of years and do it in months."

"You could always exhaust your magic, Harry. It is a more efficient way after all. It isn't like you don't know spells like the Patronus charm to do it," Hermione sniffed.

"You're right; I do know ways to do that. However for the first time I'm feeling like a normal teenager and quite frankly while I could use spells like the Patronus to drain my core I don't want too." Harry replied.

Hermione blinked in surprise again, "What?"

Harry gave a mirthless chuckle, "Come on Hermione what do you expect me to do? I've been kept magically at the level of a little kid and only last year did enough of my hormones break through the binding for me to barely try to chat up Cho. Now that I'm finally feeling like a man you expect me to not act like one?"

Hermione's face darkened, "So you're going to just slut around Hogwarts?"

"Oh you mean like the Weasley Twins?" Harry said innocently. Seeing the sudden guilty look in Hermione's eyes he pressed the point, "Yes let's talk about the Weasley Twins shall we? Unlike Ron I've always known you were a girl and from what I've learn all the girls knew about the Terrible Twins. I have an heir to House Black due to their nasty pranks. Beyond Ron being a prick behind my back any reason why you never brought up about the Twins being down right awful outside of our tower?"

Hermione looked away from his blazing green eyes, "I didn't want to attract notice. If you suddenly got in their face they would probably figure out who told on them."

Harry snorted, "So much for Gryffindor courage! You'd rather protect yourself than stick up for all the other girls they were terrorizing. Perfectly reasonable to spy on me for my own good but not look out for your fellow witches! Sad considering Sally probably thought you had her back when she told off the Twins. I'm rather shocked and disappointed how you wouldn't help out your own roommate."

Hermione turned red, "That is not how it was and you know it, Harry James Potter!"

Seeing the denial in his friend's eyes angered Harry and he leapt to his feet, "What do I know, Hermione? I know girls like Lilith were willing to suck them off just to get them to leave them alone. I know Percy use his prefect badge to trade sexual favors to avoid detentions! Tell me, did you ever have to suck off a Weasley because you were late coming back from the library after one of your marathon study sessions? What's a little oral sex rather than the 'shame' of being docked some house points?"

Hermione also leapt to her feet in rage, "You don't know anything at all what it is like to be a witch at Hogwarts, Harry! How dare you accuse me of such things!"

"Oh I dare because you haven't yet given me one reason not to see you in the same light as all the other girls here. All those witches in the D.A. willing to learn how to fight off Death Eaters and NONE of them ever asked for help! Plus are you a defenseless Squib? All the witches of the D.A. could do nothing to rein in wizards like the Twins? Did you ever try? My God Hermione! It's like how Voldemort with just a handful of Death Eaters can terrorize all of England! Just two wizards against all the witches of Hogwarts and yet they walked over you all because no one had the stones to stand up to them!" Harry practically shouted.

Seeing Hermione was having trouble articulating her reply due to her anger Harry pressed on, "While we are on the subject of sex, why is it that my best friend, a witch I spent practically all of my time with never once noticed how often I suffered from not exercising my magical core? It is a good thing Oliver Wood noticed it! Yet during

my entire Fourth Year when there wasn't any Quidditch you somehow never once did a thing or even mentioned it."

"And what was I supposed to do, Harry" Hermione asked; her voice thick with revulsion. "Was I supposed to have sucked you off? What you're asking sounds pretty hypocritical to me!"

"That's because you are reacting and not thinking! I wasn't saying you should have had to do anything other than ask me to get help. I missed the Talk because of the whole Chamber of Secrets thing. I didn't find any of this out till Oliver had Katie walk me through it! I grew up abused Hermione and 'taking care of business' is not something I could do by myself. It took Katie a long time to realize I wasn't a normal bloke. It would have been nice during the Tournament for a friend to have noticed I was having problems. I was too shy and embarrassed to ask Katie to help me. I mean it's one thing doing it in relation to Quidditch. I wasn't about to walk up to her outside the locker room and ask, 'Ms. Bell, I'm too inhibited to wank myself; could you please help me out?'"

"You read everything and I can't believe you wouldn't have studied up on the differences between Muggles and Magicals when it comes to sex and our magical cores. Lilith tells me that since witches are still expected to take care of wizards that you are specifically trained to look for the signs of magical back-up in us wizards. So how come during all the time you've known me you have never once asked me if I was okay? I would never have asked you to help me out unless I felt you wanted to help me out as well, Hermione. All the years you've known me I can't believe you'd think I would."

"Thus we are left again with why you never said a thing? Magical back-log is dangerous and it especially affects judgment. If you are my friend, how could you let me go for so long without even just asking about it? All that concern before going into the First Task yet you let me go up against a dragon when you had to know I was suffering from magical back-up! How could you do that Hermione?" Harry was panting a bit as he got this out; he hadn't realized how much this had bothered him. It had just been there, bubbling in his subconscious and now that it had come out Harry found he was very angry with Hermione over the issue.

"It is because I'm repressed! I'm inhibited and ashamed! There, are you happy now?" Hermione cried out before she collapsed back into her chair and began to sob.

It was Harry's turn to blink in surprise; this was not the reaction he was expecting from Hermione! As he watched his bushy-haired friend cry into hands, Harry felt his anger drain out of him. He also felt like a heel. Once again he was reminded how self-centered he could be. No one had issues with Voldemort like him; no one had been abused like him. Thinking about it, it was obvious that there must be lots of Muggleborns who were just as repressed sexually as he was.

Harry took a deep breath and let it out slowly. He got up and came around his desk to put a hand on Hermione's quaking shoulders. "I'm sorry Hermione. I didn't mean to shout and get you all upset. This just goes to show we have a lot to work through. As I said earlier, I've learned a lot lately and I keep finding I have a lot more to learn. We obviously have some issues to work out between us. I'm sure we can make it work. I'm not going to be a berk like Ron and just walk out on you because things are tense."

Hermione looked up; her face was already puffy from crying, "Do you really mean that, Harry?"

Harry tried to give his best reassuring smile, "Of course I do Hermione. I meant it when I said you were my best friend even if I was a git to take so long to realize it."

"Oh Harry!" Hermione cried and launched herself at him. The hug was everything Harry had been expecting for months and more. He couldn't help but notice a lot more about Hermione than in previous hugs. Her firm breasts, the feel of her arms around him and the unique scent which he'd never consciously noticed but had always enjoyed. Like with Lilith, Harry obviously hadn't really looked at Hermione in 'that way' before but now he liked what he saw. Hermione was pretty but her charm had never been about her looks. Just the feel of her in his arms as she hugged him tightly was like coming home.

Yet for all the happy feelings he was getting, Harry could finally feel what Luna had said about her. Hermione felt off somehow. It was like looking at a picture which was just slightly blurry. Harry didn't

know what it meant but it felt wrong. Not wrong in an evil way but just something odd. Till he and Luna could figure it out, he had to be careful around her, best friend or not.

Harry broke Hermione's grip and looked her deep in the eyes. He then leaned in and kissed her deeply on the lips. Before the blushing witch could say anything he cut her off, "Hermione, things have to be different now. That just has to be. You need to accept it or it is going to drive you crazy. We need to work out our issues and we will. But you also have to understand that just because I've had sex with Luna, Lilith and Narcissa doesn't mean my feelings for you have changed."

Hermione's eyes went wide, "You've had sex with..."

Harry leaned in and kissed her again. It was probably the best way to cut her off. "Yes, I have and it was brilliant. Look, I'm sorry I yelled at you. Once again I just forgot how other people can have problems just as bad as mine. I'm sorry you have problems with sex as well. However I am doing a lot better and it is because I've been able to have a shag. It is working for me and quite frankly I also need it because of my aura. But this has nothing to do with you or how I feel about you or what I expect out of you."

Hermione turned her face away with the beginnings of a pout. "Hermione, don't look like that, please. We have to get through this. I don't know how you feel about all this. How you felt about me before right now. For all I've learned, I'm still a teenage bloke and we know most wizards are flummoxed by witches. I don't know what you expected or hoped you might get from me and maybe it was nothing more than being a friend. If so, then all the sex in the world isn't going to stop me being your friend."

Harry reached out and took Hermione's chin in his hand and gently forced her to face him again. "If you wanted more from me, I'd be willing to explore that too. I should have had the courage, magical bindings or not, to try after seeing you at the Yule Ball. What you have to understand is for various reasons you'll have to share me if you do want more from me than just friendship." Harry said as gently as he could.

Hermione looked stunned so Harry took the opportunity to return to his seat. "Before you make any decisions you need to know I know

the full prophecy. As much as prophecies are hard to fully understand, the truth is I may not have long to live. Right now I'm looking at three options. I defeat Voldemort, he defeats me or we both die fighting each other. So my long-term dating options are a little murky at the moment. So while some may think I'm 'slutting around Hogwarts' the truth is it may be all I get in this life."

Hermione dropped back into her chair with a shocked look on her face. "When did you learn this?"

"Oh the dear Headmaster waited till Sirius died before dropping this tidbit on me."

If anything Hermione managed to look even more shocked, "He what? That's...that's...ooh I can't believe he did that! Wait...is that why you were so keyed up last June?" Seeing Harry nod, Hermione frowned. "I just thought you were angry over Sirius' death. I'm so sorry Harry; I should have realized there was more to it than that!"

Harry shrugged, "No worries, Hermione; you were on six potions a day at the time. Plus as I'm sure you've noticed over the years how I'm real good at keeping things to myself."

Hermione actually chuckled over the comment. This heartened Harry so he took a chance, "So are we good, Hermione? I know we have a lot to go through and I'm sure once you hear a bit more you'll have ample chances to get angry again. I want to know if I can trust you to try?"

Hermione gave a wisp of a smile, "I think so Harry. As long as you don't hide things from me and try to explain why you are doing what you do."

Harry nodded, "Hey I have no trouble with that. I really want your take on a lot of things. So keeping you in the loop as much as I can will not be a problem. However, if I keep things from you, I want you to know it is for your own protection. People have killed and died because of some of the secrets I know."

Hermione nodded as well, "I understand Harry." She looked down at the desk in thought for a bit before looking back at Harry, "So what is up with you being accused of Smith's murder?"

Harry rolled his eyes, "Oh just because some portraits think they saw someone who looked like me talking to Zacharias has Dumbledore and the staff all thinking I did it."

Hermione blinked, "That's it?"

Harry grinned as he nodded, "Yup, that's all they have."

Hermione looked at Harry with an piercing stare, "So the only evidence they are accusing you with is some portraits saw you talking with Smith?"

Harry shrugged, "Pretty much."

Hermione's face took on an incredulous look, "Harry...wow...I know Magicals sometimes can be a bit thick and accept magic in the face of the facts but this...this is just...wow."

Harry frowned, "I know. After everything I've done for the Headmaster and this school how do you think I felt when I got woken up, taken to Dumbledore's office and pretty much be accused of killing Smith? I mean do you know how to change blood into mud? I certainly don't and I told them the best I could come up with was change a bit of it and then add a self-replicating Protean charm."

Hermione face instantly changed to her 'thinking' face, "No...no that wouldn't work. You'd have to...no that wouldn't work either. Maybe if you...drat that wouldn't work either!"

Harry chuckled, "Hermione, I didn't mean to imply you needed to think up a way to kill someone like that."

Hermione had the grace to blush and look embarrassed when she realized she was actually trying to figure out how to kill someone in just that way. "Sorry, you know me. Give me a problem and I go a bit spare."

Harry grinned, "It's one of your most appealing traits. Look, why don't we get this spell over and done with and we can go for a stroll. I'm thinking we should call the D.A. together along with all the Potter Trust students together. It would be better if they all hear it from me

so they will know the score when they get pestered by everyone for info."

Hermione tensed but then looked thoughtful. "You know Harry since you are an adult and head of three Houses I may be able to beg off spying on you. I mean it is one thing for the Headmaster to ask me as a student and minor to look after a classmate. I think it would be a big difference for me to do the same to you now. As much as I hate it, the idea of a Muggleborn spying on a Lord like yourself could open me and my family up for reprisals, right?"

Harry rubbed his chin as he thought about this. He also realized he needed to start shaving more often. "You know, that is a really good point Hermione. You are spot on about the spying bit. If I caught you there are a lot of nasty things I could have done to you. The worst would be if your parents couldn't pay a fine which I know they couldn't afford would mean I could take you as a bound concubine."

"A what?" Hermione squeaked.

"A bound concubine and yes it pretty much is as bad as it sounds," Harry said with a grimace. "Pretty much I would own you. You couldn't get a job or do practically anything unless I let you. It goes without saying the way the Magical world works in that I could use you as my personal sex toy."

"Okay, so spying you is definitely off!" Hermione huffed.

"Awww and here I was hoping to have my own pet bookworm to do all my homework for me," Harry teased.

"Prat...besides you are not Ron," Hermione said. The look on her face showed she instantly regretted saying it.

Harry rolled his eyes again, "Yes Hermione I know I'll have to deal with Ron. He's one of those things I've learned which I need to learn more about. The only reason he may be at Hogwarts is because his family may have been in on stealing all of the galleons away from House Potter."

Seeing Hermione's jaw drop, "A story for another time. There is a lot of things I want to go over but there are some other people I want to be there when I do. Winky?"

"Youz called, Masterz Black?" the house elf said as she appeared. "Do youz be wantingz the foodz? I toldz Dobby he was a bad elf for not bringing youz the foodz!"

Harry blinked at this, "The food? Oh yeah the tea and sandwiches. No Winky, Dobby did right. No worries Winky, he knew not to interrupt."

Winky brightened, "Oh! I be worried Dobby let bad habits go to hiz head by being free for so longz!"

Harry laughed, "No Winky, Dobby is perfect. Could you ask Narcissa to come back for me?"

Winky curtsied and disappeared.

Harry looked over at Hermione, "I think the hardest part for me about dealing with Winky is she wants to do practically everything for me. While it has been great having them around, it creeps me out how much they expect to do! I tell you, Hermione, I'm starting to understand why so many Magicals are lazy considering what the house elves seem expected to do."

"What are you having them do?" Hermione asked curiously.

"Right now apart from just doing 'normal' things like cooking and my laundry, just cleaning up (###) and the Shrieking Shack. I found out I own it now. Plus Winky works for Narcissa as well. Even then they seemed put out that I'm not working them hard enough. I shudder to think what Winky will do when I want to cook." Harry said.

"Cook?" Hermione asked.

"While I didn't like having to cook for the Dursleys considering how I rarely got to eat anything I made, I do enjoy it. I think I would have enjoyed potions a lot more because it reminds me of cooking some times. So just because I can have Winky or Dobby cook doesn't mean I want them to do it all the time."

"Once again showing you will make a witch very happy someday, Harry" Narcissa said as she came in from the antechamber.

"I've even started to put the toilet seat down," Harry said with a twinkle in his eye.

Hermione watched as the pair chuckled over some obviously private joke. The look on her face made it clear she wasn't happy to see Narcissa.

Harry frowned, "Hermione, this is not going to be a problem. Plus if it makes you feel better how about this?" He turned to Narcissa, "Narcissa Black, as Lord Black I wish you to use the special obliviation spell we discussed and nothing else. Is that understood?"

Narcissa gave a slight smile, "But of course my lord. It shall be as Lord Black commands."

Harry rolled his eyes at her Kreacher impression, "I guess I walked into that." He glanced back to Hermione, "See, Hermione, I'm not about to turn you over to have your mind raped. Besides, I had Snape do that to me last term and I wouldn't wish that on anyone...well maybe Umbridge."

Hermione just nodded a bit blankly. Harry felt it was really starting to sink in how much power he had as Lord Black. "I need to do a few quick things so I'll leave the two of you alone. It won't take long, however and then we can go head off all the rumors about me."

OoOoO

Hermione watched Harry as he picked up the golden Buddha stature and left the office. She found she couldn't help but admire his long hair as he did so. It really did look good on him! She turned to find Narcissa had taken Harry's seat and was frowning at her with an unfriendly look on her face. This irritated her. Who was she to judge her?

"Is there a problem, Ms. Black?" Hermione asked primly. She thought it best to try to put on a brave face against the woman. She knew Narcissa was famous for her politicking and it would take everything she had to keep up with the older witch.

"Yes there is, Ms. Granger, and the problem is you." Narcissa replied evenly.

"Oh? Here I thought I was Harry's best friend. I hardly see how I can be the problem." Hermione said brazenly.

"It is because you are his best friend which makes you such a problem, Ms. Granger. That problem being is you are naïve and stupid." Narcissa said with more than a hint of scorn in her voice.

Thinking Narcissa was trying to bait her, Hermione decided to keep up her line of reasoning, "Oh? Here I thought I was the 'brightest witch of my age' which is what Harry keeps calling me. Perhaps what you considering stupidity is that I have just rejected all the Pureblood bigotry and outdated ways people like you cling too."

Narcissa surprised her by laughing. "I was expecting you to last longer before you opened your mouth and proved my point. Good! This saves time."

Hermione couldn't help but blink in surprise, "I'm sorry, are we having the same conversation here because I have no idea what you think we are speaking of?"

Narcissa folded her hands together and leaned back in the chair, "Oh yes we are having the same conversation. The problem is one of us knows what she's talking about and the other only thinks she does. You see, Ms. Granger, in one sense I know very little about you other than the biased stories my son has told me. In another sense I know all about you. I know how think, I know how act and I know how stupid are."

Hermione sniffed, "Pray tell!" She wasn't going to allow this woman to bait her.

Narcissa face broke into an evil smile at Hermione's attempt at bravado, "Did you ever wonder why you were sorted into Gryffindor, Ms. Granger?"

"Perhaps it is because I'm brave. It is the usual criteria if you don't remember from your time here," Hermione replied drily.

"Yes, brave...brave in the sense you don't use your brain and you let your feeling rule you. It is a common Gryffindor trait. It is why they are so easy to manipulate. Wave the right flag in front of the Lions of Gryffindor and they'll run at it with passion, fury and ultimately do

exactly what you want them to do. Never once do they ask why the flag they're chasing was waved in the first place. You might as well be trained dogs for the amount of forethought you put into things."

Before Hermione could respond Narcissa called out, "Dobby!"

The elf popped into the room after a second delay, "Yes Mistress Black? Would Missy be wantingz her sandwiches now?"

"No, thank you Dobby, I just want you to answer some questions for me. I understand Ms. Granger here used to knit quite a few objects and then left them in the Common Room in hopes she might free the elves of Hogwarts. Is this correct?"

Dobby shuffled his feet and looked nervously at Hermione, "Yes, she be doingz that."

Narcissa's smile seemed to become even more evil in a predatory way, "How did the other elves feel about this? What was done about it?"

"The Hogwarts elves be not likingz it one bit! They be makingz Dobby clean the Gryffindor tower by hisself. Dobby not be mindingz, though."

"Why didn't the other elves like it, Dobby?" Narcissa asked as she caught Hermione's eye.

"They be not likingz how She-Who-Knitz be tryingz to trickz elves into freedom."

"What? How could they not want to be free, Dobby? They could be free like you were!" Hermione cried.

Dobby looked down at his feet. He didn't seem to want to answer.

Narcissa gave a low laugh, "Dobby wasn't ever free was he now?"

Dobby shuffled his feet again. "No...Dobby was not."

"What are you saying, Dobby?" Hermione asked. "You told Harry you were free and Dumbledore was paying you!"

"Go on Dobby; tell Ms. Granger why you lied. It is okay. You won't be punished for it. Harry understands what you did and why. You will not be given clothes." Narcissa said gently to the elf.

"Dobby be bonded to the Great Harry Potter when he freed Dobby from the bad wizard. Dobby followz his master to Hogwarts in hopes he willz want Dobby to be his elf. Dobby pretend to be free and waits till Master Harry be askingz him to be his elf! Now Dobby be his elf full time."

"Why Dobby? Why did you bond with Harry without telling him? He doesn't want a slave; he'd rather have you as an employee." Hermione asked.

"Dobby bonded with Harry, Ms. Granger, because he would have died soon afterwards if he hadn't. Isn't that right, Dobby?" Narcissa asked the elf.

"Yes Mistress Black." Dobby replied.

Hermione was confused, "What about Winky? She was a free elf."

Narcissa gave a mocking laugh, "Yes and how was the poor dear during that time? You see, Ms. Granger, you don't know anything about house elves. You didn't know why Winky was suffering. You probably felt she was deluded in wanting to be a bonded elf again. The truth is she was merely bonded to the school which wasn't enough to sustain her. The elves you see here at Hogwarts were born here and so they grow up bonded to the school. For them the bond is enough to sustain them. For Winky, she was slowly dying until Harry took her as his elf. You might have known that if you had bothered to check your facts." She made a small gesture and Dobby bowed and popped away.

Narcissa turn back towards Hermione and leaned forward, her eyes cold and calculating, "But you didn't did you? No, you just saw something you didn't like and didn't take the time to understand. You started your silly little SPEW club not realizing you were advocating an action which would kill those elves if it had succeeded. Did anyone try to talk you out of it? I'm sure Hagrid must have since I know you and Draco had class with him."

Hermione could only nod numbly at this. As much as she hated to admit it, she really hadn't done much research on the elves themselves. She had concentrated just on how to free them.

"So people told you how you were wrong but you kept right on at it. You had quest to free those poorly, repressed elves, yes? Of course you did and I'm sure you've got a whole list of things that need to be changed in the Wizarding World. We all just a bunch of backward types compared to you Muggles, right?" Narcissa asked.

Narcissa's voice changed from a fake pleasant one to one filled with contempt, "Well Missy I've got news for you but there are a lot of things we do here in the magical world which we do for a very good reasons. Reasons people like you never seem to take the time to find out why. No, you just see something you think is wrong and off you go on your righteous crusade. This is why you are a stupid Gryffindor. I saw plenty of them growing up when I was here. Some just as brilliant as you; smart enough to best the brainiest Ravenclaw. Yet when something offended their sensibilities their brains shut off and their Gryffindor nature took over and off they went making fools of themselves."

Narcissa got up and walked over to the bookcase, "I've had these brought in from the Black library but many are from my own. They are about all I own right now and the only reason I have them is Draco was glad to see them go considering they are Muggle works."

Hermione was startled at this and looked more closely at the titles. She was surprised to see so many classical works like those of Shakespeare, Bronte, Shelly and works of philosophy. She looked back at Narcissa in surprise.

"Surprised? Of course you are since I'm just a Pureblood bigot, correct? Well Ms. Granger I've also been going to the cinema and theater since before you were born. 'We're going to need a bigger boat' Ms. Granger or maybe 'Scoundrel? Scoundrel? I like the sound of that' or even 'I'll have what she's having!' if you want something from my normal movie fare. I know plenty about the Muggle world, Ms. Granger, and I always have. We Blacks have always known. You've only gotten a glimpse of the magical world. You have no idea how many of us actually see things."

"Yes of course you all love Muggles so much like Sirius' mother!" Hermione retorted. She was angry at the older witch. Angry because she was right about her not doing the research she should have. She had, just as Narcissa said, seen something she didn't like and immediately tried to change it without looking for how it came about. She had just assumed it was slavery.

"Walburga Black was deranged. It didn't help her mother was Irma Crabbe. The main reason she was married to Pollux Black was she got pregnant in her Seventh year. Fertility is rewarded too often over other more important traits. Sadly the Black line had suffered like all Pureblood lines by having to marry into many lines like the Rosiers. My mother hated not only Muggles but anything which was different. If it was new, no matter if it was magical, she distrusted it. Then again, my dearly departed mother was also more noted for having three children than any good trait or abilities of her own. I learned almost everything I know from Cassiopeia Black. She was more my Grandmum than Irma was. She taught all of us the true Black ways. You would probably be quite surprised to learn about the other woman I looked up to. A woman I sadly didn't get to see as much of: Dorea Black"

"Harry's great-grandmother?" Hermione asked.

"The very same," Narcissa said. "My mother and grandmother didn't feel we should see her since she had married into the Potter family. Of course that never stopped my father or grandfather from taking us to visit. The Blacks are one of the oldest families in all of Britain and the Potters are not far behind in age. Our two houses have fought, allied and ignored each other at different times throughout history. More often than not House Black has used House Potter since they have always been willing to work with Muggles. House Black has always been about secrets and it was easier to have the Potters deal with the Muggles for us to lessen the chance of discovery."

Narcissa sat back down in the chair before continuing, 'It was only recently this feeling about Muggles was a racist thing and most of that came from people marrying into the House like my mother. So you do not know anything about me, House Black or much of the larger magical community. You looked at the students in Slytherin and just accepted they represented more than they are.

"Like your son for example?" Hermione asked tartly.

Narcissa didn't bat an eye at this, "Exactly like my son. I tried to raise him to be worthy of his Black blood but between my mother and Lucius, he's nothing but a coward and a fool. He's a Malfoy through and through. Harry and I recently found out just how much cowardice and deceit runs in the Malfoy blood. Much of Slytherin is composed of the children of the Death Eaters it is true."

"However if you had actually did a little research you would have found many of the families which traditionally sorted into Slytherin no longer exist. The reason for this is they refused to support the Dark Lord and were destroyed. What you see now is only what is left. Again you would have known this if you had taken the time to actually look past your own biases. Of course if you had you probably would be a Ravenclaw now wouldn't you?" Narcissa said cruelly.

"So getting back to the matter at hand, which is you Ms. Granger, and how you are such a problem. Harry is now a Lord and head of three Houses. He has to fight the Dark Lord and he has to deal with the fact many people he thought were friends and allies are actually enemies. He has to deal with his magical core and untamed magic while also trying to come to grips with feelings normal boys would have had years to try and tame. He's killed and will most probably kill again. He's also surrounded by people who all want a piece of him for all the wrong reasons. These are all the facts of Lord Black's life." Narcissa said.

Narcissa pointed at her like she was telling off a naughty child, "You, Ms. Granger, have a choice ahead of you. You can accept these facts and deal with them. You don't have to like them but you have to accept them. Or you can continue to do what you have done in the past. You can just disregard how things are and cling to how you want or wish them to be. If you do this then you become a problem. I will tell you in all honesty and not as a threat but you do not want to become a problem for Lord Black. He has stated quite clearly he is not going to play by the rules of the game which he has found himself in. He is going to forge his own path and he will not be stopped. If you get into his way he will stop you and all you will have done is hurt him terribly because you are his friend."

Narcissa leaned back into her chair, "So Ms. Granger before I cast the spell you need to ask yourself what you want from Lord Black and what you are willing to do about it. He has offered you his continued friendship and I dare say he probably offered you more. What you are being offered is something most witches would kill to have. You and I may both hate it but the truth is right now any dreams you have of making it in the magical world depends on the wizard you marry. Do you fight it or take Harry up on his offer and through him have the ability to make real changes? Or will continue to be a jealous little girl who cries when the world isn't how she wants it? It is your choice, Ms. Granger. Lord Black has outlined the terms. Can you be the friend to him he thinks you are?"

"Think on this for a bit, Ms. Granger. I will return in a moment." With a grace Hermione could not help but envy, Narcissa left her to ponder her words.

OoOoO

Harry looked up from the crystal ball he had been watching as Narcissa came into his bedroom. "Well I think that went well," Harry said thoughtfully.

Narcissa shrugged, "It is all up to her now. I wasn't lying when I said I have known to many people like her. Of course they weren't all Gryffindors. Xenophilius is another example of a smart man who cannot accept the world isn't what he wants it to be."

"Well Mr. Lovegood won't be long for this world so I hope Hermione makes a better choice than he did."

Narcissa smiled; she looked forward to the man's death for what he had done to Selene and Luna. "Gryffindors often get better after you slap them around a bit. It worked in your case, didn't it?"

Harry grimaced, "I'd rather not have to rely on Hermione being possessed by Voldemort before she gets a better perspective on things." Harry looked back at the crystal ball. In it he could see Hermione sitting there lost in thought. "I'd give her a few more minutes before going back in, Narcissa."

"Well I need to use the loo anyway," Narcissa agreed as she got up to leave.

"After you knock her out, do a check on her aura would you? I see know what Luna said about it being off but I can't make any sense of it," Harry asked.

Narcissa nodded, "I shall, my Lord. We shall see what she knows as well. I still think you should help me with legimency, Harry. You need the practice."

Harry shook his head, "No, while you're right about the practice, I'd rather test it on others who Dumbledore is less like to probe as deeply. I can pawn off new spells as things I picked up from you or things I might have gotten out of the Black library. Any hint of my legimency abilities and he would know how much I've changed."

"Good, I was hoping you would say that," Narcissa said proudly.

"Testing me, Narcissa?" Harry asked with a slight smile.

"Oh course I am for you have a lot to learn. I'm betting you will prove to be a much more attentive student than Draco was. If you are to be Lord Black then you should benefit from the lore of our House." Narcissa looked sad for a moment, "I hope somehow you will find a way to learn of the lore of House Potter. Our two Houses were friendly enemies or hostile friends for a long time and the Potters could not have resisted House Black without their own skills. I hope they are not truly lost."

"You and me both," Harry said softly. He looked down at the Potter ring on his finger. He might have accepted his new Lord Harold Black identity but his family's ring was a constant reminder of what he needed to avenge.

Harry tapped the crystal ball with his wand as Narcissa left. He was debating what he wanted to do while Narcissa was working on Hermione. He knew it would take some time. While the special obliviation would be quick, Narcissa would have to tread carefully when she examined Hermione's memories. They both had worried about what sort of mental work the Headmaster might have had done on her. There were all sorts of spells a master legimens could use to spy on people. All it took was some form of acceptance on the part of the unknowing spy. Hermione's concern for his own wellbeing would be enough the Old Man to use her.

Harry sighed. He was keyed up about the whole situation. While it had gone better than he expected the whole thing had left him a bit drained. He was worried of what Narcissa might find as well as the fact Hermione might not find it in herself to overcome her jealousy. She really did not like the fact he was having sex. Would his need for it drive his oldest friend away from him?

"My lord?" A voice called out.

Harry turned to a small portrait by his bed to see Isla Black looking up at him from a portrait of a castle he found in the Peverell vaults. "Yes Isla, what is it?"

"A Miss Moon to see you. She says she is here on business on behalf of Miss Lovegood."

"Really? Well send her in." Harry didn't know what Luna was up to as he hadn't had time to see her since the last time they had spoken at Grimmauld Place. He was surprised it was Lilith coming to see him rather than Luna herself. What ever the reason Harry rose with a genuine smile as Lilith came in.

Harry gave her a hug and the two shared a quick kiss. Lilith's eyes were wide as she looked around the room.

"Wow, Harry, first the room at Grimmauld Place and now this! You certainly sleep in style these days!" She then immediately hopped onto the four-poster bed and rolled around a bit. "Oh yeah! A girl could get to like this!"

Harry couldn't help but laugh at Lilith's love of fancy beds. "I'm glad you like it. I'm surprised you're here though instead of Luna. Is there something wrong? I mean I would expect her to come with you at least."

Lilith gave a seductive smile as she beckoned him into bed. "I'll tell you if you join me."

Harry was surprised by this but shrugged. Far be it for him to turn down such an invitation! He quickly joined the pretty Hufflepuff in bed. She surprised him again by starting to kiss him passionately.

After a minute or two, Harry reluctantly broke the kiss, "Lilith, hold up; what business did Luna want you to do?"

Lilith's face broke into a sultry smile, "Why I'm doing her bidding right now." She began to unbuckle Harry's belt.

Harry just stared at her for a moment but it wasn't till she started rubbing his growing erection through his underwear did he speak up, "Wait, Luna sent you here to have sex with me?"

Lilith looked up with an exasperated look on her face, "Of course she did! What does it look like I'm doing, Harry?"

Harry was confused so he didn't put up much of a struggle as Lilith took off his pants and underwear. As he watched Lilith suck his now fully erect cock into her mouth Harry couldn't help but wonder what was going on. The feel of the young witch's tongue on him made him moan in pleasure but why was she here instead of Luna?

Lilith let his penis fall out of her mouth, "As much as I'd like to suck you dry we don't have time." She underdid her blouse and took off her bra. She took her breasts in her hands and primped them at Harry for a bit. She could tell how much he loved looking at tits! She leaned back and hiked up her skirt. Harry saw she wasn't wearing any knickers and she was already moist with desire.

"Come on in, Harry, the water is warm!" Lilith said with need growing in her voice.

Harry took his cock and slid it up and down her warm slit to lube it up before slowly entering her. The pair sighed in pleasure as Harry bottomed out and then began to fuck her with slow, even strokes.

"Lilith as always this is brilliant...but why are you here and not Luna?" Harry asked after a moment or two of enjoying the warmth of Lilith's sex.

"I'm here because you need me Harry and Luna knows it. How she knows I'm not sure but I'm what you need right now." Lilith said as she alternated between squeezing and releasing his cock with her internal muscles.

Harry kissed her deeply. He didn't want to make her feel like he didn't want her. "How do I need you, Lilith?"

Lilith moaned a bit before being able to reply, "Luna said you would be upset by meeting with Hermione and you'd need to calm down. She says this is my gift to you. I help you center, Harry and Luna said how today is a day you need to be centered."

Harry bucked his hips a bit more as he thrust Lilith, "This is supposed to calm me down?" He started to fuck her harder. "I'm not sure if I understand Luna's logic."

Lilith began to buck her hips back against Harry's thrusts. "Oh it will become plain in a minute. How about you be a good lordling and just fuck me?"

Harry grunted and did just that. Soon he felt the familiar feeling in his scrotum. He saw Lilith could tell he was close to cumming as she licked her lips in anticipation. This was enough of a hint and as he began to cum, he pulled out and let Lilith suck his cock into her mouth as he began to spill his seed. He groaned and groaned as Lilith lived up to her namesake and sucked him like she was trying to steal his soul. With a final moan he collapsed on the bed next to the smiling witch.

Harry sighed as Lilith spooned against him and he instinctively wrapped his arms around her. Minutes dragged on as the pair enjoyed the closeness of each other.

"Do you understand now, Harry?" Lilith finally asked.

"Hmmm? What do you mean?" Harry replied a bit drunkenly. He really hadn't gotten much sleep and it was hard not to drift off when cuddled up against her.

"I mean do you think you see what Luna wanted from me?" Lilith asked.

Harry took a deep breath and tried to make his brain work instead of complaining about wanting to go back to sleep. He felt good, he realized and not just because of another brilliant shag. He remembered the loss he felt when Lilith had stopped hugging him when Director Bones showed up. How she felt in his arms in the

shower and later in bed. The feeling of closeness and warmth he was feeling now. He realized his earlier worries about Hermione and the concerns about how he allowed anger to control him when he killed Smith were gone. He felt...good.

"I think so...you are by far better than any Calming Draught I've ever gotten from Madame Pomfrey."

Lilith rolled over to face him, "Which is why I'm here. The Queen Bitch knows what she's talking about."

"The Queen what?" Harry asked sharply.

"The Queen Bitch, Harry. I'm talking about Luna. It is a nickname I gave her after we had a long chat back at Grimmauld Place. She finds it funny. You see she explained how she is your Dark Lady and what roles witches like me will play in your life. After she told me how other women will have their own roles to play just made me think of Luna as the alpha bitch of you pack, Mr. Grim!"

"So your role is to calm me down? Is that all you get to have from me?" Harry asked sadly.

Lilith sighed, "Harry I think I need to learn how to wandlessly hit you with a pillow. Do you have to feel guilty over everything? Of course I'm going to be more than that! However Luna pointed out my one gift to you is just what we're doing now. We are cuddling and being normal. It is my gift to you and one which you told me yourself how important it was when I pledged myself to you the other day."

Lilith kissed Harry deeply, "It is the reason I'm here and not Luna. She wouldn't admit it but she feels broken by what her father did to her. She likes sex and she certainly likes sex with you but she also finds she gets off on kinky sex. We had a bit of girl talk and she gets off on a lot of weird stuff. I think she feels deep down you will somehow look down on her for it. I told her she was crazy considering you evil master routine you pulled on Narcissa."

Harry looked thoughtful, "No, I could see how she might think that. After all the 'wow factor' of all this wears off I think Luna might think I'll revert back to being bashful old Harry Potter. Kinky sex would embarrass and probably disgust him. Well I'm not that Harry Potter and Luna is my Lady and I'd never be ashamed of her!"

"Good because I think tonight she intends to have some serious sex with you. She just felt right now you needed the brand of loving we have had together." Lilith beamed.

Harry rolled his eyes, "So Luna is going to be controlling who I have sex with? Setting up a schedule with different witches on different days?"

"Oh you poor baby! How you will suffer so!" Lilith joked. "Face it Harry, men do better if they just let women run their lives. Tell us what you want and we'll make it happen. Then you can concentrate on what you do best...that and shagging the hell out of us!"

Harry laughed, "I guess I'm to be the Boy-Who-Shags!"

Lilith giggled, "There are worse fates, Harry."

Harry grinned before he grew serious. "Speaking of fate, I need to get going and take a quick shower. Since we both smell deliciously of sex, I don't think this will help me with Hermione right now. By the time we're done, Narcissa should be finished up with Hermione and we can go work on dealing with Smith's murder."

Lilith got up and started to undress, "Come on Harry, the berk wasn't murdered, you executed him."

Harry's eyebrows shot up, "Did Luna tell you that before you came down here?"

"No but I don't need some fey seer to tell me what is obvious Harry. I know Smith and now that Sally is a Black then him marrying her would be the smart move. So I think he jumped you last night and sprang that on you. Also knowing Smith like I do means he probably pissed you off and you killed him. Am I right?"

Harry nodded, "I'm impressed since that is exactly what happened." Harry began undressing as well. "Actually I wish I had waited so I could have covered my tracks better."

"Oh hell Harry, Smith brought out the worst in everyone. I can't believe you didn't boot the tosser out of your D.A. last year. From

what I heard from Susan and Hannah he didn't win many friends while he was there."

Harry felt his cock twitch and start to grow again as he watched the naked witch go into the bathroom. He looked at his watch before taking it off. Good, they'd have enough time for another shag. Even if Luna felt Lilith's gift was calming him down, she deserved a good, lustful shag as well and Harry was just the wizard for the job!

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Harry and Lilith found Narcissa waiting for them in the main room with a serious look on her face. Harry's earlier feelings of calm started to drain out of him at the look in the older witch's eyes.

"What's up, Narcissa? What did you find?" Harry asked.

"What I found, my lord, is we have a problem. A very, very bad problem." Narcissa said sadly.

Harry closed his eyes and sighed. His shoulders sagged. He looked up when he felt Lilith's comforting hand on his shoulder.

"Stalin, I called it. Definitely Stalin in your last life." Lilith said.

Harry couldn't help but burst out laughing. He had to otherwise he'd cry. It was days like this when he felt less like the Paladin of Nemesis and merely Fate's squeaky chew toy.

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A/N: Okay, I know people are going to freak since this chapter represents less than about an hour in time. It can't be helped. Hopefully we can get through the weekend in another chapter or so.
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A Good Resource: A long belated shout out to Diana Summers whose essay "Secrets of the Class List" has helped me with certain aspects of my fics. While I obviously have made different choices in regard to the 'unnamed and unsorted' I do like the sections about where the characters might be from. It was from this essay I went with Hermione coming from Winchester as well as another essay on

the HP Lexicon which led me to place Little Whinging on the site of what is actually the town of Staines.

She-Who-Knits: Not sure which fic this is from but it is popular. I howled the first time I read it. Obviously something too good not to steal.

Movie Quotes: I would hope none of you would actually have to break down and Google those quotes. I certainly hope you all catch the chapter title quote!

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – VIDEO KILLED THE RADIO STAR

CHOIR ROOM, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th – MORNING

Luna squeezed his hand and leaned in and whispered, "I will be over there by Ginny. Do not worry Harry; we will find a way past this." With a very covert brushing of her lips on his cheek as she leaned back, Luna turned away with a smile and walked over to where Ginny was listening to Hermione rant about the staff thinking Harry was guilty of Zacharias' murder. Harry was finding he enjoyed the warm feeling he got from seeing Luna's enigmatic smile.

"Oi! Do I need to break some heads here? Sit down and SHUT IT! Unless you like trying to get stinksap out of your robes don't think Neville and I won't toss you into a patch of Mimbulus Mimbletonia!"

Harry had to chuckle at the look on Neville's face at Millicent Bulstrode's words. The two prefects had volunteered to help get everyone settled so Harry wouldn't have to tell the same story over and over again. Of course the mental idea of Neville and Millicent heave-ho'ing someone like Seamus into some of the nastier plants in the greenhouses was pretty funny.

Of course Neville wasn't the only one with an odd look on their faces. Most of the D.A. members were shocked how not only was a Slytherin prefect present but Harry had her helping Neville. However Bulstrode had approached him while he had been talked to Neville about gathering up the D.A. and had asked to help. Harry had heard how she'd been really shaken by what Umbridge had done to him in her office last term. Harry guessed it is one thing to go along with Pansy and Draco in their bullying ways in the Inquisitional Squad but it had been another to listen to Umbridge talk about sending the Dementors after him and watch as she almost cast the Cruciatus Curse on him.

Harry had accepted her help since Neville seemed okay with it. A quick word with Genevieve Walker confirmed his first instinct had been correct. Gina had gotten her prefect badge back and told him how Bulstrode had changed. She had stopped hanging around Pansy and Draco and had taken to her new prefect duties with a will. Gina had been surprised how little Draco or Pansy had reacted to this but Draco had lost a lot of status (along with his prefect badge) since his father had been arrested even if he had gotten released

recently. Pansy's star had fallen with Draco's and losing her prefect badge meant she now had a lot of enemies who remembered her abuse of it.

Harry had been pleased to find Lucinda Urquhart had ended up with the Slytherin 5th year witches prefect badge. Miriam Jugson had been up for the position before her father had been killed in the fight at the Ministry. The badge had fallen to Evadne Rosier since Urquhart was next on the list and at first been unable to attend. However Rosier had resigned the position when the Muggleborns returned stating she would rather concentrate on her studies during her OWL year. Besides being happy for Lucinda, Harry was pleased Miriam had declined to accept the badge. Considering what Harry knew of how her father had tried to rape and kill Luna made him happy he wouldn't have to interact with her.

Harry was also happy that Lucinda had been up for her badge on her own merits and so hadn't gotten it as some form of payback to Harry for bringing back the Muggleborns. Regardless of the reason, Harry liked the fact the three Slytherin witches prefects were all people he could work with. This gave him hope he might be able to break the Gryffindor/Slytherin feud as well as help isolate the hard core Death Nibblers away from the other Snakes. Harry had already heard a few things which implied there had been a major shake up in Slytherin House.

Harry looked out over the room as Neville waved in a few more of the Potter Trust students. While many of the students were chatting among themselves most kept looking at him. Having people stare at Harry was old hat for him but now all those eyes made him uncomfortable. Harry looked back to where Luna had joined into the conversation with Ginny and Hermione. The thought of what Narcissa had found in Hermione's head made Harry wonder how many of the views from those eyes looking at him would later be seen by Dumbledore?

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LORD BLACK'S PRIVATE SUITE, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 5th – EARLIER

Luna sighed, "I am sorry Harry but Narcissa is correct; this is very bad."

Harry found himself rubbing his scar. Over the years when he was tense Harry had found himself rubbing it. When the scar had been a horcrux it would throb when Harry was stressed. He knew now it was because his own natural mental barriers had been strained when he was worried or stressed which allowed Voldemort's soul to burn brighter. Now it was merely a nervous habit. He was glad, however, that Luna had showed up a few minutes after Hermione had left. Narcissa's spell seemed to be a complete success and Hermione, while still put out about things, acted as normal as could be expected under the circumstances.

"Okay I know why Narcissa thinks so; what is your take on this?" Harry asked.

Luna fingered the necklace Harry had given her to replace her butterbeer cork one. He had found it in the Peverell vaults when he had been looking for a wand and Harry had felt it would be a suitable replacement for her. The silvery chain went well with her eyes and the orichalcum hare reminded him of her Patronus. "Well Harry the Extra Conspectum Oculis is a very complex spell. I am sure you have noticed by now how the more words and syllables a spell has the more complicated and intricate it is? Well this definitely one of these very complex spells. Plus there are a lot of very precise wand movements which goes along with it. However the spells difficulty is not what makes it a problem. It is very hard to detect as well as defend against."

"Why is that, Luna? Miss Black said she could cancel the spell pretty easily," Lilith asked from the dining table where she had been idly flipping through the latest issue of the Quibbler.

"Lilith, please call me Cissy when we are here alone." Narcissa broke in easily. "The problem is not whether or not I can cancel the spell. You could do it yourself if I taught you the counter-spell which isn't difficult at all. The problem is there is no way I know of to confuse the spell without canceling it."

Luna nodded. "Exactly! The problem is someone, most probably the Headmaster or his agents, have placed these spells in people to spy on Harry. We could nullify the spells as we find them but this would only alert the perpetrator we know we are being spied on. This is something I do not believe would be in our best interest right now."

Harry thought at this for a second. "Yeah...okay that makes sense. It is like discovering a spy with your own spy. To unmask the enemy spy you also have to expose your own. So if Narcissa had canceled that spell on Hermione then the Headmaster would know we are looking for such things."

"Yes and then the Headmaster would know we are watching him as well since he is the most obvious suspect. Right now I think we can all agree the less Harry is seen as a threat the better." Luna said.

"Agreed," Harry said firmly. "There is still far too much I need to find out from the Old Man and I don't need him more guarded than he already is. Right now I think much of what I have done can be 'blamed' on Narcissa guiding me. That impression probably won't last long since I can't afford to look like I'm just parroting ideas I got from her."

"So what about me?" Lilith asked. "Why did I have one of those spells in me and how did it get nullified?"

Luna shrugged, "It may be every student in the school has had the spell cast on them. It is more likely you had it cast on you because you are Sally's best friend. Since Sally was Hermione's room-mate it may been a check on her. Was Hermione talking to Sally about things she did with Harry? If she did was Sally talking to others about it?"

"I just don't understand how the spell is useful. Okay so the spell records what the person has seen. But memories aren't like a video camera where you can fast-forward or reverse," Harry asked.

"Harry, while it is easy to think of the spell as a video camera recording what is seen by the person under the spell there is much more to it. You have used Muggle computers, correct?" Narcissa asked.

"I've used them a few times in the library during the summer along with some playing games on my cousin's computer when my relatives aren't home. The library has a computerized system where you can look up books." Harry replied.

"A powerful legimens can do the same thing as those computers do, Harry. It is almost the same principle. The legimens thinks of a subject, a topic, a deed or a name and only these memories come forth. In essence the Extra Conspectum Oculis spell not only records what is seen but acts like a mini-pensieve. As Luna said, this is a very complex spell which only someone like Severus or Dumbledore could hope to cast." Narcissa explained.

"So Professor Dumbledore could just think 'Harry' and only those memories associated with his name would come out of the spell in my head?" Lilith asked.

"Precisely! However it isn't something he could do in passing. The person being monitored would have to be put into a deep meditative sleep." Narcissa said.

"Which would mean it is probable most witches Harry associates with have this spell. While the wizards, especially Ron, Neville and people like Colin Creevey, probably have it, it would be easier to get the memories from witches." Luna said.

"How so, Luna?" Harry asked.

"Simple deduction Harry. Every month we witches have an appointment with Madam Pomfrey so we can be checked up in regards to 'feminine issues' as she likes to call them. This would be a perfect time to be stunned, put into the meditative state, have our memories read, have our memories altered and then set on our way none the wiser." Luna said with a hint of disgust in her voice. Harry knew Luna would see this as another form of violation. Physical or not, it sounded like rape to him as well.

Lilith nodded, "That makes a lot of sense Luna. I know Susan, Sally and I have often commented how some people seem to have longer sessions with Madam Pomfrey than most. Gals like Hannah and Sophia think it is because they might have issues like being pregnant or having some sexual disease. We never believed that because the girls who had the longer appointments were never the type you'd expect that from."

"Has it always been like that?" Harry asked.

Lilith shook her head, "No, but now that I think on it most of the times Madam Pomfrey would have longer sessions with people seemed to always coincide with whenever weird thing was going on at Hogwarts at the time."

"Yeah and if something weird was going on it meant I was in the thick of it!" Harry fumed. "It makes sense these would be the times when whoever did this would want to check out what their 'traps' have caught."

"Again this is making sense but it still doesn't explain why the spell preformed on me got deleted." Lilith said.

Luna frowned. "I am not sure. I know why they would have failed if whoever did this tried to cast the spell on me. My father had many defenses and mental traps to keep people from ever finding out what he had done to me. In your case I am unsure. Perhaps it was due to your automobile accident over the summer. You did sustain a great deal of trauma."

Harry got up from his chair and began to pace. All of the witches could tell he was furiously trying to think something through. Harry finally turned and looked at Luna, "I think I know why Lilith's spell failed but I can't think of a way to test it."

Harry turned back to Lilith and took her hands in his, "Remember how you pledged yourself to me at Grimmauld Place? You and I pledged ourselves to each other. You said you'd be one of my women."

Harry's eyes once again seemed to pierce Lilith very soul. Her heart turned over, "Oh Harry! As if I'd ever forget that moment!" Lilith replied with a breathy catch in her throat.

Harry let go of her hands, turned and took Luna's wand hand and pressed it against his heart, "I think pledging herself to me is what broke the spell. I can't prove it because Luna didn't have the spell put on her. If it had I would bet the spell would have broken when I accepted you into my heart as my Dark Lady."

Luna smiled lovingly at Harry as she caressed his cheek with her other hand, "Yes, you are the Dark Lord of my heart, my love. I would never betray you."

"Exactly. So maybe these types of loyalty bonds negate the spell." Harry said. He felt like he could just fall into Luna's wide silvery-blue eyes.

Narcissa looked thoughtful, "There is one way we could possibly test your theory, Harry. If Luna is correct then Lilith had the spell cast on her because she is Sally's friend. If this is so then Sally obviously has had the spell cast on her as well. Considering what she has seen this could be disastrous to us. However I would be very surprised if the spell has not been nullified on her as well. In her case it would have happened the minute you realized she was a Black. In the instant you accepted her into the family I believe the spell would be broken. The Black family magic is based on secrecy and the need to protect our secrets. As powerful as the spell is I doubt it could withstand the power of House Black. Even unknowingly, she could not be made to betray the head of her house."

Narcissa waited for a second before clearing her throat politely, "My lord?" Harry and Luna were still looking into each other's eyes while Luna continued to caress Harry's cheek. She wasn't sure if they had even heard her.

Harry and Luna both jumped a bit. Lilith chuckled at this, "Do you two need a room?"

Harry blushed, "Well this is my room but no I'll be good. Right...okay Narcissa that makes sense. Why don't you go check Sally right now? She should be waking up about now. I know she tends to nap around this time since Jacob keeps her up half the night."

"As you wish, my lord," Narcissa said as she got up and left.

"Okay so perhaps between Lilith's accident and loyalty bonds to House Black we may be okay for now. Yet this really makes a complete bollocks of things if we want to bring more people in. I can hardly stop hanging around my friends." Harry sighed.

Luna seemed to stare off into space for a moment. Then in a voice Harry thought of as her 'loony' voice she said, "I think the answer lies with Padma Patil."

"Why her, Luna?" Harry asked.

Luna continued to stare at something only she could see for a moment. Then that moment passed and she blinked a few times. "I am not sure Harry. I just feel Padma holds the answer." Luna sighed before continuing, "You must realize, my love, that I am a seer and not an oracle like my Aunt Sybil. I see glimpses of possible futures, probabilities and vague premonitions and nothing more. All I can say for certain is somehow Padma is involved."

"Are you sure it is Padma and not her sister Parvati?" Lilith asked.

"Oh it is definitely Padma. When you have been between a witches legs as many times as I have with her you get a feeling for who she really is." Luna said with a mischievous grin.

"Uh...yeah...okay then Padma it is, I guess," Lilith stammered.

Harry nodded, "Padma should be at the meeting I've called since she was in the D.A. so I think we should head out. I'll ask her to come back here after the meeting and we can try to puzzle out this problem and how Luna's premonition applies."

"Maybe we can get a taste of India before lunch as well?" Luna asked.

Both Harry and Lilith looked at each other and then rolled their eyes.

"You are incorrigible Luna; you know that?" Harry asked.

"Of course I am my Dark Lord; I would not be a very impressive Dark Lady if I was not!" Luna said with a regal toss of her head.

Harry grinned; he couldn't argue with that logic!

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CHOIR ROOM, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th – LATE MORNING

Harry watched as most of the people in the room started to mill around talking or getting ready to leave. Many of the D.A. members look like they were going to hang around a bit longer but the rest were heading off to the Great Hall as lunch was to be served soon.

Most had seemed content with his explanations and agreed with him the staff was barking mad to think he was the prime suspect in Smith's murder. All in all, Harry felt he had dodged a bullet. He had to work on his temper or he might whack Snape or Draco next.

"So Harry, what are you going to do about Quidditch? I asked about your ban and Professor McGonagall said it had been lifted," Ginny asked which brought Harry out of his musings.

Harry's heart sank as everyone in the room seemed to turn away from their own conversations to hear his reply. Ron especially seemed very intent on his answer. He hadn't said much during the meeting and had been sitting towards the back with Seamus and Dean. Harry could tell the trio had made some snarky comments back and forth but thankfully had kept the comments to themselves.

Drat! He'd been hoping to talk alone with Katie before this came up. However Harry knew Ginny had taken his place and with Quidditch practice tomorrow she probably wanted to know if she had if she was going to get bumped from being Seeker. Harry hadn't heard how well the other chasers had done so he didn't know if Ginny could just replace either Demelza Robbins or Natalie MacDonald.

"Well Ginny I'm not sure. I had planned to talk to Katie tomorrow before practice about things," Harry said with a nod towards the older witch. "Right now I am not certain. I have a lot more responsibilities now and plus I'm not even sure as an adult if I'm allowed to play anymore."

"Of course you can play, Harry. Lots of teams have had emancipated students on them. Honestly did you ever even look at those awards I know you've had to clean in detentions over the years?" Hermione huffed.

Harry grinned; so far the events of the morning hadn't affected Hermione like he had worried they might. He still didn't know what they were going to do about the spy spell but at least the special obliviation had worked. "Yeah well you know me...why should I bother to remember such things when I have my own walking copy of Hogwarts: A History as a friend?"

Waiting for the laughter to die down, Harry continued, "Well even if I'm not on the team I've been thinking of creating a new charitable

foundation for the school. After Lucius Malfoy bought all of Slytherin brooms it sort of ruined the game here at Hogwarts. I mean how could the other three teams say they are competing fairly?"

"Yeah just like you on your Firebolt," Ron said through a mouthful of Chocolate Frog from where he was lounging.

This comment earned Ron a lot of glares but Harry just shrugged, "While I treasure my Firebolt as one of the few things I have left from my Godfather you are absolutely right. How can I know if I am as good as some like Charlie Weasley when I have a professional broom and my opponents mostly have school brooms?"

"So what will this foundation do, Harry?" Cho asked. She had been very quiet during the whole meeting and seemed to have a hard time meeting Harry's eyes. However Harry appreciated she had showed up with the rest of the D.A. when called.

"It is simple; it will help finance the brooms for the school. Since House Malfoy donated the brooms to Slytherin House, I figure we could start off with every House having the Nimbus 2001 since this is what the Slytherin's have. Hopefully I can get this up and running before the next game so all the other Houses can practice on them. This way the playfield is level and the game will depend on the skill of the players and not the speed of their brooms." Harry said.

This caused the room to break out in excited chattering and questions began to come at Harry from all sides. Harry tried to answer the babble until a loud whistle broke through all it all. Harry sent a grateful nod towards Neville. "Yes, thank you Neville! Look folks, I haven't worked out a lot of the details yet. I did spend most of my last week getting the Potter Trust students back into school. I'm sorry but right now Quidditch is a bit low on my priorities. However I do have Narcissa Black looking into it for me. I hope to have a reply back from the Nimbus Company shortly to see if they can supply enough brooms to make this work. I'll let you all know more when I know more, okay?"

This mollified the excited students who quickly began to talk about how this would affect the upcoming season if everyone were using the same brooms.

"So you won't come back to the team then Harry?" Katie asked. Harry thought she sounded hurt.

"Well Katie if I don't come back full time I'm sure I could at least stay on as a reserve seeker. From what I've heard Ginny has done well in my place." Harry said. He hope this would let Katie know his decision to join or not wasn't personal.

"Oh come on Harry, you only have two more years and if you don't try to go pro this will be your only shot at Quidditch other than pick-up games with friends who probably can barely stay on their brooms! Besides I'd rather be a chaser than be a seeker; you know that." Ginny said. While a lot of Gryffindor heads nodded at this, Harry could tell Natalie wasn't happy since as the youngest chaser she'd get bumped down to reserve if Ginny went back to being a chaser.

Susan Bones spoke up, "She's right Harry but there is more to it than that. Just because you have all these new responsibilities doesn't mean you can't have fun. I know before my Uncle Darrell was killed he worked hard to break my aunt from always working and never playing. Its now sort of a standing joke in the DMLE if Auntie Bones gets too crabby that they sort of force her to go play some golf," Susan said with a smile.

"She's right, Harry! My mom complains my dad can't even play a game of golf without bringing partners from the bank and doing wheeling and dealing." Justin said with a nod towards Susan. "So she got him hooked on skydiving of all things and he's much more laid back now. You have to be able to blow off some steam once in a while."

"Besides from the sounds of it, you get to blow off a lot of steam after a game of Quidditch in Gryffindor House!" Terry Boot said with a knowing leer. This look gave way to one of pain as Anthony Goldstein jabbed him in the ribs with his elbow along with a disapproving look.

Sure enough faces around the room either looked amused, embarrassed or in Ron's case turning red with anger.

"Well we do have the best hot tub in the school from what I've heard..." Harry said with a hand on his chin as he mimed thinking

deeply. Maybe a joke would get people off this topic. Ron already looked ready to explode and if Ginny blushed any harder she'd probably faint from not having enough blood in other parts of her body.

Sadly Harry's comedic timing needed work as Ron leapt to his feet with a shout, "Oi and I bet you just can't wait to get girls like Ginny into the tub with you, right? Well you can just forget about it! You stay away from my sister!"

"Oh god Ron not again..." Ginny said as she did a face palm.

"Yes Ronald this is getting really tiresome..." Katie started to say.

"She's not your sister so butt out!" Ron shouted as he rushed up to Harry. Ron's face was livid as he punched his finger into Harry's chest for emphasis. "I'll tell you what I've told Kirke and Sloper. You...stay...away...FROM MY SISTER!"

Most people in the room went from being shocked at this sudden outburst to almost gasping when it felt like the room temperature dropped. Harry grabbed Ron's hand and calmly said, "Ginny doesn't need you to protect her honor or have you forgotten she took on at least two adult Death Eaters by herself last year?"

Ron scoffed as he ripped his hand out of Harry's grasp, "Yeah I remember it because you almost got us all killed!"

"I didn't ask for any of you to come and I didn't want any of you to come. You practically forced me to take you all so don't be blaming me for that." Harry said coldly.

"Right, nothing is ever your fault is it? Why should it since Dumbledore always covers for you?" Ron sneered.

"Ronald Bilius Weasley!" Hermione practically screamed but Harry waved off what ever she was going to lay into the ginger with.

"Look Ron, I'm not going to argue with you. You can think and feel whatever you want. However we were talking about Ginny. I think who Ginny lets touch her is her business and not yours, brother or not."

"Like you know anything about family!" Ron hissed.

This time everyone in the room did gasp except for Luna whose face went white. "Harry, no!" she cried out in desperation but Harry's hand was already moving with his wand suddenly in it. In an instant the tip was below Ron's chin.

"I'm sorry Mr. Weasley but I didn't catch that last part. I don't know about family? Yeah I guess your right considering the family I know best is yours. Your family, the ones who took me in and then treated me like one of their own. In return I saved not only Ginny's life but your Dad's to say nothing of giving the Twins their seed money for their shop. So I think I've got a bit of Weasley credit stored up. Now if Ginny wants to scrub my back after a Quidditch match then one, its her decision and not yours. Two, if that were to happen it is none of your bloody business. Ginny's not a little girl anymore and she certainly doesn't need you butting into her life." Harry said with ice in his voice.

Ron's eyes had bugged out at the feeling of the wand under his chin. Seeing he wasn't going to say anything, Harry dropped his wand and reloaded it into his holster, "See? We can have a civil discu..."

Harry was cut off as Ron lashed out and punched Harry full in the facet which spun him around sent him sprawling onto the floor. "Get up you nancy boy" Ron yelled as he put up his hands like he wanted to box.

Wands were coming out but before a spell could be cast Ginny screamed, "Stop! Let him handle this! He needs to be taught a lesson!"

Ron leered at Harry who had rolled over and was wiping the blood of his lips from his bleeding nose. "Hear that Potter? Even my sister thinks it is time the high and mighty Boy-Who-Lived be taken down a peg."

"I was talking about you, you fucking arse!" Ginny snapped.

Harry got to his feet and just stared at Ron as the blood dripped down across his lips and onto his chin. In the crowd Lilith felt her blood run cold at the sight. While not transformed, she could not help but think of the sight of Harry in his Grim form with the blood of

Pettigrew on his muzzle. The look in his eyes mirrored the baleful gaze he had had that night.

"Come on Poof Boy! Time you learned you don't mess with my sister!" Ron shouted as he lunged forward and started to punch and jab at Harry.

The onlookers were amazed, however, how Harry seem to effortlessly glide out of the way of every punch. In fact he seemed to move with a speed which seemed almost inhuman.

"I must say Ron I am a bit confused. If I'm the mincer you say I am...why are you worried about me and your sister? Think I'll convince her to trash all that tacky orange Canon crap you decorate your room with? Or give you long overdue etiquette lessons on how to eat like a human being?" Harry said in lightly. His face however was set in a mask of concentration.

His inability to land a punch and Harry's comment was obviously pushing Ron's past anger and into blind rage. "Fight me you ruddy plonker!"

Harry backed off a bit seemingly unconcerned how his nose was still bleeding. "I tell you what Ron, how about I will stay away from Ginny when you stay away from Nigel. Will that work for you?"

Ron seemed to swell up and get even redder in the face (if that was even possible) before lunging at Harry with a wordless scream of hatred.

This shout of rage terminated in an almost girlish squeak when Harry lashed out and kicked Ron dead in the crotch. This kick was followed up with a savage punch to the face which knocked Ron to the floor.

Harry slowly walked over to where Ron lying on his side and holding his groin and moaning. He knelt down and roughly rolled Ron over and grabbed him by his lapel and held him up. Harry wiped his nose with his other hand and held it up to Ron. "Do you know what this is Ron? It is the blood of three Houses. More to the point it is the blood of the head of three Houses. Blood which you have caused to be drawn."

The room erupted in whispers and murmurs after Gina Walker let out a shocked, "Uh oh!" Many of the students from Pureblood houses had similar shocked looks.

"You know Ron, I've always been happy your family hasn't gone for all the Pureblood bigotry considering your family are Purebloods. However I would have thought your parents would have taught you better about magical customs. Pretty sad how I seem to know something you don't. Or did you just forget? I did warn you the night of the feast but perhaps you were too busy moaning about the delay in getting to stuff your gob to listen." Harry said dangerously.

Ron let out a bit of a whimper at the look in Harry's eyes. Harry reached out and wrote 'war' on Ron's forehead in blood. "Hmm...matches your hair, Ron. You see Ronald Bilius Weasley, by attacking me I am within my rights to take it as an act of House War between yours and mine. Of course most wouldn't think to do so since you are just a teenage git brassed off because you think I might be thinking of shagging your sister. What most people think doesn't concern me and quite frankly never has. However I am thinking perhaps an example needs to be made. I warned people not to think of me as plain old Harry Potter anymore and yet here you went and attacked me forgetting I am Lord Harold James Potter-Peverell-Black."

Harry abruptly let go of Ron who fell back onto the hard floor with a curse as his head hit the floor. Harry got up and with a flick of his wrist had his wand out and a casual flick of it cleaned up his nose. Many in the watching crowd noticed how his lips never moved or how cleaning off the blood and fixing his nose took two spells even though it only look like he did one.

"You know what Ron? I am in my rights to call up your father and ask for compensation for your actions. If I was so inclined I could ask for a lot of things I know your family can't afford. I could break your family and I would bet it would get your dad kicked out of being head of House Weasley. I mean I'm sure your Dad has brothers and cousins who would love to be head of the Weasley clan. However, there is another option I could take."

Harry turned to Ginny who had gone white. "So Ginny remind your brother of what I did for you at great personal risk to myself back in your first year?"

Ginny's mouth moved but not a sound came out. Her eyes were wide and it was obvious to those who could see her face that she knew exactly where Harry was thinking.

"I'm sorry Ginny but I didn't catch that. Did I hear you say I saved your life by defeating a shade of Voldemort on top of killing a basilisk with the Sword of Gryffindor? What was that bit about you owing me a life-debt?" Harry said cruelly.

Harry looked back at Ron who was now wide-eyed as well. Harry looked down on his one time best friend before lashing out and kicking him again. "Did you even stop to think that in trying to somehow 'save' Ginny you have made it so I could call in that debt from your father and take Ginny as a bound concubine? I would own her and I could have her as my personal sex toy if I wanted. I could pull her out of school and there wouldn't be anything anyone could do about it. So good show Ron! It is obvious you are less worried about your sister and more about how her locker-room activities are somehow embarrassing you."

Harry looked up to where Dean and Seamus were standing looking shocked. "Guys could you do me a favor and take this git to the infirmary? I think it would be better for all that he cools off under Madam Pomfrey's care."

Seamus looked mutinous but Dean nodded, "Yeah...we'll do that." Dean silenced Seamus with a look when the other looked about to protest.

Ginny came up to Harry as the two went to pick up her brother. "Harry...you wouldn't do that to me would you?"

Harry looked at Ginny and for a moment could only see a Weasley, a family who probably had profited from House Potter's fall. "It all depends on House Weasley, Ginny. You tell me, has your House ever done anything to me or my Houses to merit taking you?"

Ginny visibly relaxed. It was obvious she was just thinking Harry meant Ron's attack on him. "I'll go make sure my idiot brother doesn't make any trouble."

Harry watched as the trio hustled Ron out of the room; students moved away from them as if they were diseased. Quite a few of them were also looking at Harry either in awe or something which he felt to his disgust looked like fear. Harry also noticed that Nigel had quietly left at some point.

"Okay, I think it best if everyone tries to keep this as quiet as we can," Neville said loudly. "Remember, Ron may still be suffering from his mental injuries from back when he was attacked in the Ministries. Let's not make this out to be anything else, okay? It won't do the D.A. any good or Harry. Now I think we all need to grab some lunch."

Harry locked eyes at Neville and gave a grateful smile. Neville nodded before turning and going over to where Gina and Millicent were talking. Harry looked over to where Luna was standing; he could see relief in her face.

"Harry...you aren't going to punish the Weasleys are you?" Hermione asked as she came up to him along with Katie. "I think Neville is right about Ron. He hasn't been the same since the fight at the Ministry. He's been a foul git to everyone and he's been making life miserable for Ginny."

Harry shook his head, "It all depends on them, Hermione. If he is still messed up like you think then I don't even know why he's even here. However, I have more important things to worry about then Ron being an over-protected brother on top of being a jealous berk."

Harry turned to see Hermione watching Neville with a funny look on her face. "Is there a problem Hermione?"

Hermione shook her head, "I'm just surprised Neville works so well with the Slytherin prefects."

"Why? I'm sure you do as well. Well maybe not with Millicent." Harry said.

Hermione shrugged, "She's okay. I think we've both grown up a bit. Besides she did apologize to me the other day. I apparently remind her of a girl who didn't like her back in primary school who liked to make her look stupid. Funny how I never liked her because she

reminded me of a girl who always bullied me while I was in primary school as well."

"Well I think you better get over there. I'm betting Neville is planning on how to deal with this on top of all the crap that will come up with Smith's murder." Harry said.

Hermione sighed. "I am glad I'm a prefect but I never realized how much extra work it is. It is really cutting into my study time."

Luna, who had been listening, quietly spoke up, "So you will only review and redo your work three times instead of six?"

Harry and quite a few who heard the comment began to laugh. "She's got you there, Hermione."

"Just because the rest of you are content to wait till the last minute and turn in your first draft doesn't mean there aren't some of us who want to turn in quality work." Hermione huffed. She got up and walked over to where the rest of the prefects were talking.

"As you said, Harry, she's got you there!" Katie said.

"I solemnly swear I was just trying to maximize my Quidditch practice time!" Harry said with a false look of innocence.

"Speaking of Quidditch, what are you going to do, Harry?" Katie asked in a soft voice.

Harry looked at Katie and for a moment just stared into her blue eyes. He couldn't read what was in those azure depths but there was definitely more there than just the concerns of a Quidditch captain. "I have a feeling my day is going to be busy with the whole Smith incident. Plus I'm sure Professor McGonagall may want to yell at me for fighting. I was planning on coming and seeing you before practice tomorrow."

Katie smiled, "How about you meet me afterwards instead? Weasley has usually stalked off by then so he won't be a problem. Of course he's about one more remark or incident away from me kicking him off the team." Katie bit her lip, "Of course Professor McGonagall might kick him off the team after today's fight."

"Is MacLaggen really that bad? Harry had to wonder if Katie was willing to give Ron as many chances as she had.

"You have no idea, Harry!" Katie said darkly.

"Well then after practice it is. Hopefully I will have an answer back from the Nimbus Company about whether or not we can get everyone brooms." Harry said trying to be upbeat.

Katie gave a warm smile, "I'll be waiting."

Harry watched her leave and couldn't help but admire how her jeans and sweater really highlighted how well built she was. He felt the familiar tightening in his groin as he started to get erect. Just what he needed before he had to hit the loo!

Harry walked over to where Susan was talking with others from the D.A. about expanding the lessons to the younger years.

Harry leaned into the group, "Excuse me for a moment; I'm going to hit the loo and I'll be back if you want to talk this through a bit more formally before lunch."

"It shouldn't take too long, Harry" Justin said. "I think between me, Susan, Hermione and Anthony we should be good. I think Neville said he'd also help teach more if it doesn't interfere with his prefect duties. Considering how well Ginny did at the Ministry I'm thinking she could also be a big help if she's willing."

Susan nodded, "We still need to figure out a way to pull more Slytherins into the group. There is a lot of confusion down in the dungeons so now is the time to try splitting more people away from Malfoy and his bunch."

"Okay great! I'll be back in a jiff. I have some ideas on who to approach besides the Slytherin prefects." Harry said.

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WEST WING CORRIDOR, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th –
MORNING

"I can't believe you attacked Harry, Ron" Dean said for about the fourth time as they made their way to the infirmary. While Ron could walk unaided, he was still a bit punchy and grimaced every time they had to go down stairs.

"Yes dear brother, I soooo appreciate you helping me towards my life-long ambition of being a sex toy. How could the life of a professional Quidditch chaser compare to that of a concubine?" Ginny said with icy sarcasm.

"Bastard has had it coming. Once again you all want to let him get away with things. You haven't seen him like I've seen him!" Ron said in an unapologetically surly tone.

"Well I wonder how we might not have been seeing the real you," Seamus said. "I mean we always thought you were off with Potter when you weren't in the Common Room. Now that I think on it there were plenty of times he was there and you weren't. So what did he mean with that comment about staying away from Nigel?"

Ron growled at this. "Potter thinks he can switch his nancy-boy ways onto me! Hah! I was just helping the little midget out with his magic. Felt bad for the little titch for being teased by all the birds in his year. He just needs a real wizard to show him how things are! Like he'd get that from Poofdah Potter!"

"I don't know Ron. If Harry is such a poof why does he have practically every girl in our year trying to drape themselves over him? Hell I've even seen prissy Ms. "I'm saving myself for a librarian" Granger making eyes at him." Dean said

"I'll show her what a real man is like as well!" Ron said dangerously.

"Oh please Ron! You are embarrassing me! 'Real man' huh? When was the last time you even kissed a girl?" Ginny asked. "You couldn't even have a decent date with one of the prettiest girls in your year at the Yule Ball!"

"She's just a wog; what did you expect?" Ron huffed.

"Just a wog, huh?" Dean asked in a dangerous tone. "Well then explain to me, oh Casanova, why you ended up with 'just a wog' instead of some other pretty bird?"

"An explanation which will have to wait for another time, I am afraid," said a stern voice from behind them.

"Professor McGonagall!" the teens all exclaimed.

"Mr. Finnegan, Mr. Thomas, you may leave; I shall be ensure Mr. Weasley makes it to the infirmary." McGonagall said.

Seeing the look in the elder witch's eye, the two wizards beat a hasty retreat and were thankful they didn't end up somehow in detention for just being in proximity with Ron. The look on McGonagall's face as she had stared down at the Weasley's was not a pleasant one.

"So what happened Ms. Weasley?" McGonagall asked.

"Uhm...well we were at a meeting of the D.A. and all of the Muggleborns which Harry brought back. He wanted to tell us about Smith's murder so we wouldn't hear it via the rumor mill. We then got to talking about Quidditch and then my brother here felt he needed use Harry as a punching bag because of a joke about the hot tub in the Gryffindor locker room."

McGonagall eye's narrowed as she leaned in towards Ron who shrank back from her, "Is that all there was to this? Was that all that was said? I admit to being curious why Mr. Weasley has 'war' written on his forehead in blood."

Seeing how Ron didn't look like he was going to own up, Ginny continued. "No, Professor, it was just another round of Ron not being able to keep his big mouth shut about Quidditch. Harry made some comment about Nigel but that's about it."

"Were wands drawn?" McGonagall asked. She seemed less threatening all of the sudden.

"No ma'am, although Harry had to fix his nose from after Ron hit him pretty hard to start the fight. I...sort of asked if the fight could be allowed. The prefects in the room wanted to stop it but I thought Ron needed to have this beat into his head a bit" Ginny answered.

"Well then, Mr. Weasley, since you obviously can walk unaided I suggest you get to the infirmary. I will discuss this later with you and your parents. However I will be recommending to the Headmaster you spend another week or so back at St. Mungo's. As much as I'd like to give you detention from now till Christmas I believe it may have been unwise to have you released from hospital as early as you were."

"But Professor, Harry is going to..." Ron said hotly.

"Mr. Black is not going to do anything unless you keep provoking him. Since you obviously seem willing to attack your best friend who has never treated your sister with anything other than courtesy it is obvious you are not in your right mind. Now get yourself to the Infirmary before I have you pulled off the Quidditch team!" McGonagall said in a tone that brooked no nonsense.

Waiting till the grumbling teen shambled off towards the infirmary, McGonagall turn her stern gaze back to Ginny. "So what did Mr. Black do after he obviously beat Mr. Weasley?"

Ginny blushed and hesitated.

"Ms. Weasley considering how much trouble of late has come from your Quidditch activities, perhaps your brother might not be the only one tossed off the team. You will already be doing detention with me Monday night for encouraging fighting. Now tell me what happened." McGonagall threatened.

"Harry told Ron how his attack could be seen as something he could declare House War over. That's when Harry wrote on Ron with his own blood. He then told the git how he could call in my life-debt to him and take me as a bound concubine!" Ginny said desperately. Harry had said he wouldn't but Ginny knew it could happen as easily as him changing his mind!

McGonagall looked mildly surprised by this, "What did Mr. Black say about this? I'm sure you asked about it."

Ginny nodded, "He just blew it off saying why would he take me unless House Weasley had done something really bad. He's really mad at Ron but he'd never take me like that!"

"Yes...indeed why would he over a silly fight?" McGonagall said thoughtfully. "Very well then, I think it best if we just let this incident lie."

"That's what Neville said. He's been working with the other prefects to keep things calm." Ginny said. She was relieved to change the topic.

"Prefect Longbottom is correct. I will say you need to comport yourself better, Ms. Weasley. Quidditch is not an excuse for licentious behavior. It would be wise for you to take care of your own after-game needs for the remainder of the season. I will be speaking to Ms. Bell on this.

Ginny almost protested but thought better of it. "Yes Professor" she said in a small voice.

"Then we are done here. Run along to lunch, Ms. Weasley," McGonagall said in a kinder tone.

After the red-headed witch disappeared from view, McGonagall wand came out and made an elaborate flourish.

Inside Dumbledore's office, the Headmaster turned at Fawkes' squawk to see a silvery cat sitting on the back of a chair. In the voice of the old witch it said, "Albus, I fear we must speed up our plan for Mr. Weasley. After a week at St. Mungo's we will have to move quickly to set up his martyrdom."

The message Patronus faded to the sigh of a tired old man.

XxXxX

Harry dried off his hands and nodded to the first year Hufflepuff who had come in and just gawked at him while he had washed his hands. Harry wondered if there would ever be a time when this didn't happen to him.

He walked out of the bathroom eager to get back to discussing plans for the D.A. but almost knocked over Padma who was waiting just outside the door.

"Blimey Padma! You're going to get run over standing this close to the door!" Harry said.

"It's okay Harry...I just wanted to be sure not to miss you," the Indian born witch said.

Harry was about to reply when he checked himself. Padma's reply sounded funny in his ear. She almost sounded like Luna did when she had been full on Looney. Plus she had a sickeningly sweet smile on her face. Something she'd expect on Lavender's or her sister face. She certainly didn't look like the studious Ravenclaw he was used to.

"Padma are you alright?" Harry asked cautiously.

"I am now," Padma said as she swept Harry into a hug and started to kiss him passionately.

For a moment or two Harry was too surprised to do much but accept the kiss. For an additional few moments he melted into the kiss as their tongues began to duel. However finally the voice in his head overrode the sudden heat in his loins." Harry pushed Padma away from him.

"What's gotten into you, Padma?" Harry asked panting a bit.

"Hopefully you as soon as possible!" She again had that adoring look on her face. She reached out and grabbed Harry's hand and started to pull him down the corridor.

Still trying to figure out what was going on; Harry decided to see where she was taking him. In a moment they came to a door which Padma flung open and pulled Harry inside. Harry almost groaned; it was a broom closet.

As soon as the door shut, Padma again latched on to Harry. This time one hand was on his arse while the other began to rub his expanding cock through his trousers. "Oh Harry, I want you so badly!" Padma practically panted with lust. Again she began to kiss him passionately.

As much as her hands felt brilliant on him, Harry knew something was wrong. Padma had always been reserved, cool and a bit shy.

This wanton witch busy trying to snog him senseless while feeling him up was not her. Amortentia? Was someone pranking her? Him? He had to get her somewhere to figure this out. At least Harry could tell by her aura that it was indeed Padma and not someone under a glamour or using Polyjuice potion.

"Padma, hold up...do you want me to take you?" Harry asked. He had to get her someplace safe to figure this out!

Even in the darkness Harry could almost see the witch's face light up, "Yes Harry, I need you. Please I'll do anything you want." Padma's hands began to unbutton his trousers before Harry caught her hands up in his.

"Wait, Padma this isn't the place for it. Wouldn't you rather do this on a wide, four-poster bed?" Harry asked hoping Padma shared Lilith's love of fancy beds.

"Oh yes, yes! Will you tie me up? Is there a mirror on the ceiling so I can watch you take me?" Padma moaned.

"Yes there is," Harry lied. "Let's go but we can only do this if you calm down and just pretend we're going to my room for some studying. Can you do that for me Padma?"

Padma leaned in and kissed Harry again before laying her head on his chest, "For you I would walk over coals. Command me and it shall be so!"

"Okay, calm and collected, just follow me and act normal, alright?" Harry asked. He was really worried now. Padma was starting to sound if she was somehow channeling Dobby which was a very unsettling concept!

Harry opened the door of the closet carefully as was thankful there was no one in the corridor. The thought of Dobby made him think of something, "Dobby!"

The little elf popped up after a moment, "Yes Masterz Black?"

"Dobby, Ms. Patil and I are going to my room. Could you inform Ms. Lovegood to join us there? She should be in the choir room. Dobby,

I need you to tell her this without anyone else hearing. Also tell her it is urgent."

Dobby bowed low, "It bez done, Masterz Black!" With another pop he disappeared.

Harry turned to Padma who was staring up at him with a dreamy look on her face. "Okay, Padma, just two students going to study."

"It shall be as you wish, Harry!" Padma said again sounding like Luna at her looniest. Luckily she seemed to take his warning to heart and they made it to his suite without any problems.

"Isla would you please let Luna in when she arrives. If she's with others then let me know before you let her in," Harry said before the portrait swung open the entry.

Padma had already skipped into the room. Harry blinked at this. While Padma was easily one of the prettiest girls in the school she was also one of the most reserved. Seeing her skip like a happy little girl was cute as it was scary. What was going on with her? Worse was the thought that the person Luna thought might help with the spy spells seemed under some sort of curse.

Harry sat down on the room's loveseat and patted the cushion next to him. Padma practically jumped into his lap and leaned into him, her full lips already puckered up for more snogging.

Harry put a finger on her lips, "Just a second Padma, I'd like to talk a bit before I...uhm take you."

Padma pouted but relented.

"So...what did you do today Padma? Anything weird happen today?" Harry asked.

"Nothing Harry. Today is just another glorious day with you!" Padma cooed. Harry couldn't help but notice her nipples poking through her blouse or that she hadn't worried about modesty when she sat down and her skirt was hiked up enough so he could catch a glimpse of blue panties.

"So no odd food, shared snacks or spells gone wrong during study?" Harry asked forcing his eyes away from the panties and nipples. It was bad enough he was hard as a rock without adding fuel to the fire.

"No but it was so wonderful to watch you beat up Weasley. You were so manly and dashing!" Padma eyes shown and she slipped a hand under her skirt and obviously into her knickers.

Harry almost groaned when he realized that while Padma was obviously not in her right mind, she was sitting next to him while he was aroused and his aura defuser was in the other room. His aura was not helping the situation that was for sure! However before he could excuse himself, the door opened and Luna came through.

Harry let out a relieved sigh; help had arrived!

"Hi Luna!" Padma said brightly. "Harry's going to make me a woman after we finish our chat! Would you like to watch?"

"Is he now?" Luna said. Harry watched as she looked closely at the other witch. Oblivious to the scrutiny, Padma continued to finger herself while looking lovingly at Harry.

"Oh yes! He's going to take me on his four-poster bed! He might even tie me up!" Padma said happily.

Luna looked at Harry who rolled his eyes and shrugged. Luna nodded and just watched the other Ravenclaw for a moment. She then turned back to Harry and gave him a pointed look which Harry had no trouble understanding: play along.

Luna moved in and joined Padma on the couch. It was crowded so Luna was practically lying on the other witch. "Now Padma, before Harry can make love to you, well you have to get permission from his Lady."

"What! But I have to have him Luna! Who is this Lady? What must I do?" Padma said in a suddenly frightened voice.

Luna kissed Padma on the cheek, "Do not fret Padma. I am his Lady and all I need to do is be sure you can please him."

Padma's face brightened with joy, "Oh but I can! I can prove it!"

Luna smiled, "Will you do anything I say to prove it?" She looked over Padma's shoulder at Harry and raised an eyebrow. Again Harry got the message to play along.

"Oh yes Luna, I'll do anything for Harry!" Padma squealed happily.

"Then strip and get down on all fours like a dog." Luna commanded as she got up off the couch. The Indian witch almost went airborne she jumped to her feet so fast. She began to quickly take off her clothes with little concern whether or not she was ripping them or popping buttons...

"Harry, could you go get your defuser and sit in the Barcalounger over there? Luna asked.

Harry nodded. It was hard, however, to tear his eyes off Padma as she got naked.

"Chop, chop Lord Black! It looks like we will be having a taste of India in a bit so be patient!" Luna chided.

Harry grinned as he quickly made his way into the office. With a wave of his wand and the incantation, he activated the Buddha and went back into the main room. Padma was already naked and on all fours before Luna. As Harry sat down in his chair, he couldn't help but marvel at the wonderful arse Padma had. That and her skin was a smoky color was exotically enticing. His cock seemed to want to rip through his trousers to get at her.

"How do you feel Padma? Are you still ready to do anything for Harry?" Luna asked.

"Yes, please tell me what will please him!" Padma moaned.

Harry frowned and he could tell Luna had hoped the defuser might help things. Apparently his aura wasn't affecting what ever was wrong with Padma.

Luna reached down and stroked Padma's hair almost like she was petting a dog. "Padma, Harry likes dogs very much. He likes them

because they are good, kind, loyal and loving. Can you be a good doggy, Padma?"

Harry eyebrows practically hit the ceiling as Padma nodded as she began to bark, wag her butt and then pant with her tongue hanging out.

Luna giggled as she took Padma's head in both hands and did an Eskimo kiss. "Oh you are such a good doggy! Yes you are!" Luna said like she was talking to a small child.

Padma barked some more and started to rub her head against Luna's thigh. Harry again felt his cock twitch as Padma continue to waggle her butt at him.

Luna patted her on the head, "Oh such a good doggy deserves a good name doesn't she?" Padma barked again. "I think Paddy sounds to Irish so how about we call you Petme? Do you like that, Petme?"

Again Padma barked happily and nuzzled Luna's hand. Harry was frankly blown away by this. What had happened to the shy reserved Ravenclaw he'd known in the D.A. meetings?

Luna hiked her skirt up to reveal she had no knickers. "Come here little, pretty Petme. I think you can use that tongue of yours for something besides panting. Come here girl. Harry likes to watch little puppies make his Lady happy. You want to make Harry happy, don't you?"

Padma quickly leaned forward and started to lick Luna's sex. She'd occasionally waggle her butt at Harry. Harry saw how quickly Luna's eyes drooped as she leaned back and started to pant. "Oh you are good little doggy, aren't you Petme? Yes, right there...such a good puppy you are."

This praise seemed to please Padma as she seemed to increase her licking of Luna. Harry finally had to unbutton his trousers to relieve some of the pressure on his penis.

Luna saw the movement and smiled and evil smile, "Oh your Master likes what his little Petme is doing! Now fuck me, fuck me good

Petme!" Again Padma barked and waggle her bum before starting to finger-fuck Luna with quick, deep strokes.

Watching Luna begin to writhe and moan under Padma's fingers, Harry couldn't help but think of all the money he could make selling a pensieve memory of this! However the sheer sexiness of watching the two witches was too much for Harry so he started to take off his trousers.

Luna's eye's snapped open. "Oh pretty Petme; your master is going to get undressed and I will have one more task for you."

Harry dropped his trousers and practically ripped off his shirt. He stood there panting with his cock sticking out, hard and impatient.

Luna pushed Padma away from her dripping sex with obvious reluctance. "Turn around and look at that, pretty Petme."

Padma's face shown with Luna's juices and a look one might expect on someone in the throes of some sort of religious experience.

"Do you want to suck his cock, Petme" Luna whispered into her ear.

"Woof!" Padma said in a throaty voice.

"Okay here is the final test. If you pass, little Petme, you will be Harry's prized bitch for ever and ever." Luna said sweetly. She then looked up and Harry saw the seriousness in her eyes. "Harry please transform."

"What?" Harry exclaimed.

"Release your inner beast, please," Luna said in a tone which clearly said do it or else!

Harry just stared at the two witches for a moment trying to figure out what Luna was up to. She just looked back expectantly while Padme continued to pant like a dog while wiggling her bum like a happy puppy. Could this day get any weirder?

Centering himself, Harry felt his magic flow through him. This was only about the third time he'd done this since the first time he'd accidentally transformed and killed Pettigrew.

Luna watched as Harry shimmered and morphed into a Grim with a coat of darkest obsidian and eyes that seemed to pulse. She watched as Padme's eyes grew round and she stopped wiggling.

Luna leaned in and cooed sexily in her ear, "Oh look, pretty Petme, your master's dick is still waiting for you to suck it." Indeed Luna was amazed at the sight of the large bright red monster hanging down from Harry's hindquarters. "Now go suck it, you little bitch!" Luna said as she slapped Padma lightly on the arse.

With a lustful growl, Padma lunged forward on all fours to get at Harry. She managed to grab his cock but before she could do more, Harry gave out a very surprised bark and rapidly transformed back into human form.

"What the hell, Luna!" Harry asked as Padma began to bob her head over his cock. He was so shocked he barely registered how good she was with her tongue.

Luna drew her wand, "Stupefy!" to which Padma gave jerk and collapsed. "There, that should hold her for a bit till we figure out what is going on." Luna said calmly.

Harry took up the stunned girl and laid her out on the couch. "Luna, for the record, never stupefy a woman again while my dick is in her mouth, got it? I'd really hate to explain to Madam Pomfrey how I got teeth marks on me if she bit down reflexively."

Luna had the grace to look embarrassed. "Sorry, I was not thinking."

"And I don't know what to think! I'm assuming there was a reason for all of this?" Harry asked.

Luna nodded. Now that she wasn't play acting, Harry could tell she was almost as stunned by Padma's actions as he was. "Yes I did. Padma is very shy and even in bed with me and Su Li she has to be coaxed into things. She seems to be overcompensating for how her sister acts."

Harry looked down at the beautiful witch on his couch, "Okay but she was acting anything but shy ever since I met her outside the bathroom."

"Exactly which is why I was trying to see how far I could push her. I thought if I pushed her buttons it might break whatever is making her be like this. For an Indian, Padma is rather funny when it comes to being naked. From what I have heard, you cannot keep Lavender and Parvati clothed in the Gryffindor girl's dorms. I swear Padma wears a bathing suit to the bathtub. When we coax her to have sex, it has to be very dark and even then she usually wears a slip." Luna explained.

"Yet she shed her clothes without blinking," Harry said.

"Yes and she went down on me and finger-fucked me without a protest. Normally Su Li and I have to gang up on her and bring her to orgasm a few times before she gets loose enough to do the same for us."

"What about the little doggy routine? I'm going to spank Lilith for coming up with this whole Mr. Grim and his bitches theme."

Luna laughed, "She would probably enjoy it, Harry; I know I would."

Harry sighed; he'd walked right into that one.

"Harry, Padma is a very proud witch. It grates on her immensely on how badly witches are treated and worse how people of color are treated. Did you know that Ronald had the gall to say the reason he felt he could treat her so badly at the Yule Ball was because she was 'just a wog'?"

Harry clenched his fists, "He didn't!"

Luna shrugged, "He is not the only one who thinks that. You would expect Ravenclaws to be more tolerant but in many ways we have just as many Pureblood bigots as Slytherin does. Anyway the point is if there is one thing Padma holds dear is her pride. The last thing she would do would demean herself and act like a dog."

"And if that didn't break her than having her go after me as a dog should have." Harry said thoughtfully.

"That it failed means there is something really wrong with Padma. I doubt even Amorteria could make her try to suck you off as a dog."

Plus with you in contact with the aura defuser it seems to rule out your aura." Luna said.

"So now what?" Harry asked. He wasn't sure if taking Padma to Madam Pomfrey was the right answer just yet.

Luna looked thoughtful for a moment before calling out, "Dobby!"

Again the little elf popped in, "Yez Missy Goodylovz?" Harry smirked at Dobby's name for Luna.

"Dobby, can you find a student for me? Her name is Su Li and she is a Ravenclaw in Harry's year. I need you to find her and ask her to come here as soon as possible. Tell her Padma is in trouble and I need her gifts. She will know what I mean. Can you do that?"

Dobby nodded happily, "I canz Missy Goodylovz! Doeaz this needz to be secret?"

"Yes Dobby; you are such a smart elf!"

Dobby beamed and then popped away.

Luna looked distracted for a moment and then came over and hugged Harry. "Now my Dark Lord you need to help your Dark Lady out with a serious problem."

Harry smiled at the need in her voice, "And what might that be, my Dark Lady?"

Luna began to nuzzle his neck while guiding his hand to her sex. "I need you to finish what pretty little Petme started."

Harry sighed, "Please don't let Lilith hear you call her that; she'll never stop using it!" Harry's fingers found Luna to still be hot and moist. Since the angle was a bit awkward, Harry leaned against the table which made it easier to thrust deeply into Luna.

Luna moaned as he alternated between deep slow thrusts and shallow quick ones. "Oh Harry even with the defuser you feel so wonderful!"

Harry leaned down and captured Luna's lips with his own. After some heated kisses he nibbled on one of Luna's earlobes. "I think aura or not, you feel pretty wonderful yourself!"

Luna began to buck more urgently against Harry's fingers. "You like watching me and Padma, didn't you? You wanted to take her while she licked me?"

"If I didn't I'd be the mincer Ron thinks I am!" Harry joked between kisses up and down Luna's throat.

"Oh Harry, I'm feel like I am floating!" Luna said. Harry rotated her around so he could lay her down on the table. He leaned down and took one of her huge and hard nipples in his mouth. Luna moaned loudly and locked her legs around Harry.

Harry wished he could plunge into her but he didn't want his aura pulse to go off around Padma in her condition. So he just concentrated on pleasuring his Dark Lady the best way he could.

Luna came loudly but quickly begged for more. Never one to be so rude as to say no to a Lady, Harry cheerfully complied. He added a third finger inside her and teased her anus with his left thumb. Luna sounded like she practically swallowed her tongue with the gasp she made as Harry buried his fingers deeply into her.

Harry concentrated on just remaining steady as Luna bucked against him. Finally he had to release her nipples as she was thrashing around too much to keep them in her mouth without possibly biting her. Luna seemed to be taking a page from Narcissa as she began to loudly shout, "Oh! Oh!" over and over again. Indeed she let out a loud scream of sheer ecstasy as she came...

...just as Su Li and Lilith walked in on them.

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A/N: Nothing like spending a few hours reading five chapters of a fic only to find it severely unfinished to motivate one to finish this chapter! This chapter was delayed since I wrote a lot of it, realized one of the scenes was going to be too long so I split the chapter. Then after this chapter once again hit 15,000+ words with lots more

to do I split it again. So chapters 14 & 15 should be out very soon. (sigh) I know, three chapters just to do a weekend! =0

Story Traffic: I've been looking at the numbers of people reading this story and I must admit I'm a bit troubled. Not sure why I can have 7,000+ who have read chapter 12 but only 2,500+ or so who have read chapters 7-10. I'll just say if you feel the need to skim and skip chapters you are seriously going to be wondering how the hell I end up with the ending of this story. This story is sort of a Scooby-Doo tale and if you all aren't paying attention...well when Harry pulls off the mask off the villain at the end and it turns out to be Madam Z. Nettles (And she would have gotten away with it if it weren't for those darn kids!) don't send in reviews telling me I suck. While you don't have to read anything you don't want too, I didn't write it just because I was trying to pad an essay for class.

Chapter Title: Before Google and other internet browsers geeks and nerds had to actually know things. If you are of a certain age there is a good bet you'll get the joke here.

Spells: Extra Conspectum Oculis = Sight Beyond Sight...if you don't get this joke then you are obviously too young or just not as nerdy as you thought you were.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – SERAGLIO SUITE

HEADMASTER'S OFFICE, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th – NOON(ish)

"I'm sorry Prefect Granger but I'm afraid I didn't quite hear you. What was that you said?" Dumbledore said with just a hint of anger.

"Headmaster, I said I refuse to inform on Harry...I mean Lord Black any longer." Hermione said resolutely.

Dumbledore sighed; why couldn't anything ever be easy of late? "Ms. Granger, I have Harry's best interest at heart and always have. The Greater Good demands large and small sacrifices from us all. With Voldemort's return it is imperative that Harry be watched for his own good."

"Be that as it may, Professor Dumbledore, but I can't be the one to do it any longer. I have no problem watching but I refuse to inform any longer." Hermione said.

"And why is that Ms. Granger?" Professor McGonagall asked. She didn't seem angry but merely curious of the younger witch's reasoning.

"When I was talking with Harry today, I was pulled aside by Narcissa Black. She pointed out to me that there would be all sorts of people who might want information on him. If I were to give up such information then I could set myself up to be attacked by Harry's enemies like Lucius Malfoy. If it could be proven that I was spying on Harry then he could take me as a bound concubine!"

Dumbledore and McGonagall shared a surprised look. "Ms. Granger, you are one of Harry's oldest friends. How could you even think he would do such a thing?" Dumbledore asked kindly. Perhaps this wasn't going to be as hard as he previously thought.

Hermione crossed her arms and glared up at him, "I don't think he would either. But then again I didn't think he would try to kill Draco Malfoy. He told me right to my face that I stopped him from killing that git. So while you may feel he wouldn't do it, it won't be you who would become a life long toy to him if he changed his mind."

Professor McGonagall sighed, "She has a very valid point, Albus. In fact since Mr. Black is so strongly associated with you then your enemies in the Wizengamot might even try to force him to take her as punishment if she is discovered. Since she is a Muggleborn it would fit well into their agenda to punish her for daring to spy on an Ancient and Most Noble House to say nothing of three."

"But with Mr. Weasley probably off to St Mungo's we need Ms. Granger's insights into what he's thinking! Now that he has his own rooms he is even more cut off." Dumbledore fumed.

"Albus, we have a castle full of portraits, prefects and teachers. It will have to do. While I fully agree Mr. Black needs to be watched I'd rather not lose the best student we've had in decades to something as vile as becoming a bound concubine." McGonagall said.

"You really think I'm the best stu..." Hermione beamed before Dumbledore cut her off.

"Yes I suppose you are right. Very well, Prefect Granger I will not ask you to inform on Harry any longer. However, I want to impress upon you how important he is. I would hope your adventure into the Department of Mysteries illustrated the need to watch him. We cannot afford to lose Harry to something Voldemort projects into his mind again!"

Hermione looked affronted at the very idea she would not help her friend. "Of course I will Professor Dumbledore! I always look out for Harry. I wanted to look after him since the start of term...something you prevented I must remind you! May I go now? I would not like to miss lunch."

McGonagall looked at the Headmaster for a moment. The old wizard was looking cross at being talked to by one of his own. She smiled inwardly at her Gryffindor courage and so spoke up before the Headmaster could. "Yes Ms. Granger, but please wait outside for a moment. I would like to coordinate something with you and Prefect Longbottom."

Hermione nodded and left with the air of a vindicated woman.

"Albus, while she is still a 6th year, Ms. Granger is almost of age. We cannot simply treat her like she's a simple First Year. She's a

witch with firm opinions. I'm frankly amazed we've been able to get as much out of her as we have. Her love for Harry is strong."

Dumbledore looked sad for a moment before getting a grip on his emotions. "You are right, Minerva. I just don't like having so many of our people being taken out of the game so close to the end."

"Albus we have dozens of 'eyes' on Potter, Ms. Granger being one of them. While it is true there will be a lag in reporting, the death of Smith gives us a tailor made excuse to call people in for 'counseling' on how they are reacting to the boy's murder. We can use this excuse in a week or two and then again in a month or so. Whoever killed Smith granted us a great opportunity." McGonagall soothed.

Dumbledore brightened at this. "I do believe you are right Minerva! Additionally I doubt young Malfoy will be able to control himself which will lead to a duel which we both know will result in Potter killing him as well. This will give us ample opportunities to pull our spies in."

"Plus if we set up Mr. Weasley's 'attack' in Hogsmeade properly we can put more pressure on the Ministry about Voldemort as well use Weasley's death as another reason to call people in for counseling sessions." McGonagall said thoughtfully.

"Yes...Voldemort and his allies cannot refute the attack since it would reveal he is indeed back. With Severus we can stage the attack properly with the Dark Mark and all. Cornelius and the Prophet will obviously try to show this was a set-up. However I think the Minister is about to find pushing public opinion this way and that to suit one's political needs always comes back to bite one in the end," the headmaster said.

Dumbledore popped a lemon drop in his mouth and then began to chuckle. "When people like Lucius try it show the attack was staged it will allow us to show they are covering for the Dark Lord. Seeing the Dark Mark over the dead body Harry Potter's best mate will go along way in swaying opinion back to our side. It might even topple Fudge's administration! As much as the necessity for Mr. Weasley's death pains me it is as you said an opportunity to recover much of the ground we've lost since Sirius escaped from Azkaban. Thank you Minerva, sometimes even I forget we have plans nestled in plans."

"We've both had reason to lose faith that the Greater Good would triumph in the end, Albus. I myself almost lost faith when the Trust was destroyed. Now, I must take my leave. I've kept Ms. Granger waiting long enough."

With a slight smile and a nod, McGonagall rose and walked down the moving staircase. She found Hermione waiting patiently for her.

"Is everything alright, Professor?" Hermione asked.

"Indeed it is, Ms. Granger," McGonagall said happily. "Regardless of these new developments I do not believe I need to stress how important knowing what Mr. Black is doing can be to the future of Britain. You my dear, as always, are pivotal in it all."

Hermione smiled, "I'm well aware of how important I am, Professor, as well as Harry. We will both play the role we have to play. No matter how hard he resists, Harry cannot turn away from his fate. Even I know that much about prophecies. I'll make sure he's ready for the Final Day."

"I have always known you would. Failure is not in your blood." McGonagall said proudly.

Hermione looked wistful, "Hopefully success doesn't end up with Harry's blood being spilled. He's the only true friend I have."

"My dear, we can only prepare for the worst and hope for the best; you know that." McGonagall said kindly. "I told you how hard it would be when I showed you the prophecy. No matter how fond we are of him we must acknowledge the odds of him surviving are not in his favor."

Hermione looked down at her feet in embarrassment, "I just wish I could...show him more how I feel."

McGonagall put a comforting hand on Hermione's shoulder, "You are what you are, my dear. Just as Harry Potter cannot run from his fate, you cannot run from yours. It is difficult to do but one must accept our lot in life or go mad. When our lives seem destined for sorrow we must face it with the courage of Gryffindor and take action. Go as far as you can, Ms. Granger, and then go a step

further no matter how hard or impossible it seems. It is the Gryffindor way."

Hermione looked up with a determined look on her face, "I won't let you down Professor."

The elder witch watched as her young Lion headed off towards the Great Hall for lunch. No, she thought proudly, you've never let me down and I doubt you ever will.

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LORD BLACK'S PRIVATE SUITE, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 5th – NOON(ish)

"My god Harry it's your second day here and you're already breaking in your 'kitchen' table!" Lilith said with an embarrassed laugh.

Harry blushed as he unentangled himself from Luna. With a quick gesture his wand shot into his hand. "Accio bathrobes!" From his bedroom flew two fluffy robes. He rapidly gave one to Luna.

Before he could put his on Harry was startled to find Su Li next to him. She reached down to his still erect penis and gave it an exploratory caress. She looked up at him with a sultry smile, "Nice but I must say your aura is even more impressive."

She took his right hand in her own, "May I?" Before Harry could do more than blink in surprise she started to suck Luna's juices off his fingers.

Harry was speechless. Only Paul Runcorn in Slytherin was quieter than Su Li. She was renowned for being shy but here she was licking Luna's release off his fingers while fingering his cock!

Luna laughed as she put her robe on. "Oh I wish Colin was here with his camera; that look is priceless!"

Su Li finished licking Harry's fingers clean with a lusty lick of her own lips, "Delicious as always Luna. Now can you tell me why you need me? Did you shag Padma here senseless and are looking for Round Two with me?"

Harry rapidly put on his robe now that Su Li was done. They had work to do and from the way Lilith was looking at his cock implied she was more than willing for another go at him even if they had already shagged twice earlier.

Luna shook her head, "Sadly as much as I would love to and from the look of 'not-so-little-Harry' I think he would as well, we have a big problem with Padma. She jumped Harry coming out of the bathroom and pretty much is acting like a slag on Amortetia. She seems to want to please and obey since Harry was able to get her here after she had dragged him into a broom closet. When I got here, I was able to make her do things Padma would never do. For that matter I got her to try to do something most girls wouldn't even conceive of doing much less actually try."

"Like what, Luna?" Lilith asked curiously.

"You don't want to know; trust me!" Harry said darkly.

Su Li walked over to the naked witch on the couch. She stared at her for a bit. She turned to Luna. "I can't get a good reading on her. There is some sort of interference."

"Oh, sorry I forgot that I had it on." Harry reached down to where his clothes lay in a heap and pulled out his little Buddha. As he stood up he saw the shocked look on Su Li's face.

"An aura minder! Where did you get that?" Su Li asked.

"A Black ancestor of mine won it in a game of Go a century or so ago in the Orient or so I'm told," Harry replied.

Su Li looked gobsmacked, "Heavens above, Harry! You're aura is incredible now and you're telling me the minder is on?"

Harry nodded, "Yeah I had my magic bound till last June. Narcissa Black got this for me because I'm having some...issues with broadcasting emotions and the like. Luna had me turn this on to see if my aura was doing something to Padma but it didn't look like it."

"So you're 'broadcasting emotions' huh? I'll bet you are!" Su Li said knowingly.

"Harry, Su Li here has a gift. She can sense auras and thus is quite empathic. While rare it not uncommon in certain families since it seems to be hereditary like seer blood is." Luna explained.

Su Li nodded at this, "It is why I seem so quiet and seemingly shy. It takes a bit of control when I'm surrounded by a lot of people. It is hard not to be overwhelmed by it all. Being in the Great Hall when everyone there takes a lot out of me. However, I can be quite fun in private," the witch said with a sly wink to Harry.

Luna took her wand and levitated Padma off the couch, "I think we should put her in the spare bedroom. Then at least there is more distance between her and Harry when he turns off the defuser."

"Then what?" Lilith asked.

Su Li shrugged. "I will try to synch my aura with hers. It is an old way to help diagnose problems. People with my gift often become healers because of this. We literally can make it so we can 'feel their pain' which is good when a patient is unconscious or in a coma. My family has had many healers in it because of our gift. It is rare for any spell, potion or well...anything for that matter to not affect your aura. Even if you just went out and got pissed, it affects your aura. Hopefully I can figure out what is wrong with her."

Su Li looked at Harry with a knowing look, "I assume since you haven't taken her to Madam Pomfrey you are worried this might be related to Smith's murder? Someone going after people you know to frame you?"

Harry nodded, "Yes but I'm not sure why they went after Padma. I would expect going after Parvati if they want to go after them over someone like Hermione or Ginny." Harry found it disturbing he could lie so easily regarding Smith's death. Maybe he was more Slytherin than he thought.

"Well no time like the present I guess," Lilith said. She went over to the spare bedroom and opened the door for Luna who floated the unconscious Ravenclaw onto the bed. "Should I close the door?" Lilith asked.

"Please," Su Li replied.

"Can I ask you a stupid question before we get on with this?" Harry asked.

"Yes you may; this is your place after all." Su Li said with a slight smile.

"Is your first name Su or Li and why do people always call you Su Li? I mean isn't that like having people call me 'Harry Potter' all the time?" Harry tried not to sound like an idiot but he didn't think he was doing a good job of it.

Su Li laughed, "It's not a stupid question, Harry, if you'll allow me to call you that instead of Harold. No, my name is Su and my family name is Li. Yes it would be more proper to say 'Li Su' when calling my name but we are not in China. However since I have never felt like a 'Sue' I find it easier to just go by my full name."

"I think any witch who has given my John Thomas a wank is entitled to call me Harry." Harry said a bit gruffly.

Su Li struck a sexy pose, "What can I say? I'm a rebel. Padma isn't the only one who chafes at being a witch in a wizard's world. I find it empowering to take charge of what ever I can and my sexuality is one of those things I can control. Plus while we've never really hung out, you've never come across as the type of bloke to see a forward woman as a slag, correct?"

Harry chuckled, "Su Li, for all my wealth, fame and what not I still find it amazing to find out so many witches seem interested in me. I know now I have my aura to deal with but last year when people like Justin, Anthony and the Twins would tease me about girls making eyes at me during D.A. meetings? Well I just couldn't believe it."

"Yes, your aura. I really want to feel it, Harry. Even with the aura minder on it is...delicious I guess you can say." Su Li said with a funny catch in her voice.

"And I'm not even purposely broadcasting anything," Harry said with a touch of smugness.

"You can do that? Su Li said with a raised eyebrow.

"Well when the binding on my magic broke and I came upon some...information about magic in general I wondered why Voldemort didn't do more with it when he was here at Hogwarts. So while I was stuck up in the North Tower I experimented with broadcasting emotions. So far I've done pretty well." Harry said.

Su Li nodded while she seemed to be taking measure of his aura.

As Harry watched her do this he realized something. "Su Li, I notice you didn't shudder or yelp or have any reaction to me saying 'Voldemort' yet you weren't in the D.A. when I trained everyone not to freak out over the Dark Tosser's name. How come?"

Su Li looked up at him with a smile, "Well I could say I'm a Ravenclaw and we are above such petty fears but the truth is I've only lived in England since I was nine. My family moved here from Hong Kong. So my family and I do not have the fear associated with his name."

"So why did you your family move?" Harry asked.

Su Li paused for a moment before answering, "Perhaps a story for another time? No offense 'my lord' but I am not sure I know you well enough to tell the tale."

Harry smiled to show he hadn't taken any offense. "None taken. I am now the head of a House renown for its secrets. It would be hypocritical to pry into yours."

Su Li face took on a rather sly look, "Yes that is true. Maybe we might do business later, Lord Black. I think perhaps if things work out then perhaps there might be profitable business between House Li and House Black."

Harry suddenly wished he had more of Narcissa's political skills. Su Li obviously was offering something unexpected and he didn't want to lose face by saying the wrong thing. He knew enough about oriental cultures from his readings in the library to know such things were as important to them as it was for the goblins.

Su Li saved him by shrugging and gesturing to the defuser, "Could you turn that off, Harry? I would like to get a feeling for your full aura."

Just because activating the aura minder didn't work doesn't mean your aura might not be involved."

"Sure thing, Su Li," Harry said and tapped his wand on the Buddha. He almost laughed out loud at how comically large the Ravenclaw's eyes got as his full aura hit her.

"Gōuride!" Su Li exclaimed. Harry wasn't sure what the Chinese term meant but he had a feeling it wasn't something you said in polite company.

Su Li stared at him for a moment before closing her eyes and taking a deep breath through her nose. It reminded Harry how Luna had similarly seemed to drink in his aura as if it smelled good.

Su Li shook her head as if to clear it. "Oh my...I so want to shag you now. I'm betting it would be unbelievable!"

Harry gave a tight smile, "Not to brag but Luna and Lilith have already come to that conclusion."

Su Li stared at him with a rather dazed look on her face. "I'm sure they did and probably 'cum' was something they did a lot in learning it. Well before I wet my knickers let me go check on Padma. Please stay here or if that door over there can get you farther away it would be better."

Harry nodded, "Yeah that's my office. I can wait in there. Will this take long?"

Su Li shrugged, "Hard to say. It will depend on what is wrong with her. I've found I can generally tell what is wrong with someone very quickly after I synch auras with them and that should only take about five minutes or so."

Harry nodded, "I'll be waiting. Good luck." He walked into his office and sat down at his desk. Harry looked at his watch and saw it was time for lunch. He called Dobby and asked him to prepare lunch for at least five people.

While he waited Harry thought about Ron and Ginny and the rest of the Weasleys. He was going to have to find or 'create' through bribes some friends in the Ministry. Even with Ragnok offering him a

favor Harry knew better than ask the goblins to reveal information on one of their clients. Plus there were many things which were illegal by human law which was just business as usual under goblin tradition.

This left the Ministry as one of the only options to see where the money trail led in regards to House Potter. Maybe Daniel Greengrass might be of help. Of course if he could stomach it, Harry knew he could always see Arthur and Molly over the holidays and using legimens on them. However he doubted it would be that easy. If it was true about the only constants being death and taxes, Harry felt he'd have a better shot at finding out what happened via tax records then counting on being able to snoop in the Weasley's memories.

Of course there was always the possibility that Tonks might either have a lead or be able to get some info through her being in the Order. Harry was worried, however, that Dumbledore would try to keep some distance between him and Tonks since he was now Lord Black. The Headmaster had to know her ultimate loyalty would be to him and not the Order now. Harry smiled to himself. After a good long shag Tonks would be even more loyal to him than the Old Man!

This of course also brought up the whole issue with the Order of the Phoenix. Harry was pretty sure the House Potter fortune was used to fund the order just like House Lovegood's money had been during the last war. What Harry couldn't understand was what the money had gone toward. While he suspected Dumbledore had used some of it to pay for the Tri-Wizard Tournament that would not have used it all up. Considering what the money was used for in the first war, Harry couldn't see those same expenses being needed till around his Fourth Year.

Had the money gone to bribes to counter-act the plots planned by Narcissa? He needed to ask her because from what he'd seen in the Wizengamot was Dumbledore's grip on power was not that tight. While Dumbledore couldn't be seen bribing people, Harry could think of plenty of people who could be used as straw men to do it for him. Harry couldn't help but hope that maybe that much of his family fortune was just hidden in anticipation of being used. That way he could get the goblins to help reclaim it. If not...well whoever stole from him was going to regret it!

The Order could be another place to look for clues. Harry had to wonder about Remus. How could his parent's friend be a party to this? Was the fact he was a werewolf being used against him somehow? Or was he just another person who felt Dumbledore's shitte didn't stink and thus didn't see the forest for the trees? Harry felt he owed it to his father to find out if Remus was a traitor, dupe or victim. He really prayed it was the latter.

Harry was about to get up and turn on his wireless set when the door banged open to reveal Su Li. She was breathing hard as if she'd just run around the lake. "Su Li? What is it?" Harry worriedly exclaimed.

"I need you...I need you to come with me, please!" Su Li asked. Harry thought she sounded like she was biting back something she desperately wanted to say. Su Li took his hand and started to drag him toward his own room. Harry felt a bit of déjà vu over this considering what Padma had done earlier. Su Li opened the door and pulled him inside. She let go of his hand and walked towards the bed as Harry shut the door.

Harry was unsure of what was going on but before he could ask Su Li cried with a flourish of her wand, "Tunica Natalis!" Harry didn't know the spell but it was obvious what it did as her clothes disappeared only to appear neatly folded on his dresser. She fell back onto the bed.

"Harry take me, take me now and take me hard!" Su Li begged.

"Not you too Su Li!" Harry groaned. As much as his heart sank at the thought that whatever was wrong with Padma had now infected Su Li, he had to admire her near perfect porcelain skin. Her breasts were pert and her pubic hair neatly trimmed. She was the model of cute if it weren't for the undisguised look of lust on her face.

"No Harry, I'm okay but I won't be if you don't take me right now! I need to purge my aura so fuck me please! Fuck me and I'll be able to explain later!" Su Li begged.

Harry hesitated and then dropped his robe. He went to the bed and teased her slit with a finger. "Uhm Su Li, I don't think you're wet enough yet."

Su Li gave a groan of frustration as she spread her legs wide and grabbed both ankles as she leaned back and presented herself to him. "I think you know how to fix that Lord Black!" Harry was amazed at how limber she was be able to do this before he remembered she did Tai Chi most mornings. He banished these thoughts as he knelt and begun to eagerly lick up, down and around Su Li's sex.

Su Li began to moan deeply as Harry tongue-fucked her for a bit before teasing her clit with quick, hard licks. His tongue seemed rougher than either Luna's or Padma's and the full force of his aura was making her dizzy. "Please Harry...I...I don't know how much more of this I can take. I....your aura...oh...I'm...OOoohh!"

Harry was surprised as Su Li came. He had barely started on her. Harry was about to keep going and was just bringing his hand up to start finger-fucking her when he felt Su Li's hands as she grabbed his head. "No...I need YOU...and I need you inside me now!"

"I think you better do what she says and just shag her, Harry" said Luna from behind him. Harry turned to see both Luna and Lilith coming into the room. Both witches had eager looks of anticipation on their faces.

"Yeah Harry, it doesn't look like no is in her vocabulary right now," Lilith said.

Harry looked back at Su Li who seemed to be about to hyperventilate she was panting so much. She had a look on her face similar to what Padma had looked like when she had seen his cock for the first time. With a shake of his head, Harry mounted her.

Su Li gave a cry of unabashed joy as Harry began to fuck her. Merlin she was tight Harry thought as both Luna and Lilith laid down on the bed and both took a nipple into their mouths. Almost immediately Harry felt Su Li's sex contract around his cock in another orgasm.

What the fuck was going on here? Harry couldn't help but think as Su Li began to thrash against his him and the tongues of the other two witches.

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FLITWICK'S OFFICE, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th – LATE AFTERNOON

Filius Flitwick was not a happy man at the moment. If asked to describe Flitwick, anyone who knew the diminutive wizard would invariably describe him as jovial and approachable. Today, however, the head of House Ravenclaw was in a pensive mood. So many things had been going on of late which made no sense. This bothered Flitwick who had a very orderly mind and a desire for things to be just so. So far the term had been anything but that.

As bothered as he was, Flitwick applied himself to his task. There was so much to do with the return of his Muggleborn Ravens. For all the trouble Lord Black seemed to drag with him like the wake behind a massive ship, the return of those students made up for it for much of it. Of course much of what troubled Flitwick of late directly related to the one time Harry Potter and this rankled him. While he had liked James Potter it was Lily who held a special place in his heart. He and Horace had killed many a bottle of mead reminiscing about Lily Evans, a witch as gifted in charms as she was in potions. To see her son so embroiled in plots and dark designs weighed heavily upon him.

This feeling was made more so recently when he had received a secret visit from none other than Director Ragnok himself. While popular, Flitwick knew he was tolerated because he was so good at what he did, first as a champion dueler and then as a teacher. If he hadn't, Flitwick knew he'd be treated as scum by most humans. While mostly human himself, Flitwick had learned early his goblin heritage was the only thing most Magicals saw in him. So in his heart Flitwick had secretly embraced his goblin heritage.

Thus when the Director approached him to ask a favor, Flitwick had been amazed. While the goblins had always treated those like him quite well, he had never expected one such as Ragnok to meet with him considering it might be seen as something beneath one of Ragnok's stature. What the powerful goblin had asked had been even more surprising. Could it be that Harry was the Chosen One? The wizard spoken of with hope by many goblins even as more cynical goblins dismissed the idea as prophetic drivel? Flitwick knew oracles were even rarer amongst the goblins than they were in

humans. So a goblin prophecy was therefore much more profound since the Ministry never shared any information of human made prophecies that might affect the Goblin Nation.

Flitwick shook his head and chided himself on his woolgathering and applied himself back to his paperwork. As surprising as it was, Flitwick would have helped Lord Black regardless of being asked to by Director Ragnok. He rather admired the lad, especially considering what had come to light of his terrible upbringing. How Albus had managed to rationalize that crime to himself, to say nothing of Minerva, was another thing which weighed heavily on the charms teacher.

A loud knock interrupted his thoughts. Flitwick looked at the clock and saw he had another 35 minutes before open office hours. He sighed; it was probably one of his prefects with a problem. "Enter!" He called out as he tidied the papers on his desk.

Flitwick was surprised to see three of his Ravens enter with Lord Black. This surprised turned to apprehension. Now what has gone wrong? He couldn't help but notice Ms. Patil had an uncharacteristically silly expression on her face and the others looked grave.

"Ms. Patil, Ms. Li, Ms. Lovegood, my Lord Black how can I help you." Flitwick asked. For some reason he was not surprised it was Harry who answered him.

"Professor, we have a problem and we were hoping you could contact Padma's parents right away. It would be best if they got here as soon as possible." The young wizard said.

"Indeed? What would that problem be?" Flitwick asked.

"Sir, I think it would be best if we explained it with her parents here. From what Su Li tells me, time is of the essence." Harry said heavily.

"Ms. Li?" Flitwick asked.

The witch nodded, "Yes Professor, there is a problem with Padma which will only get worse the longer it isn't resolved. I've tested her aura and there is really only one way to deal with the problem. It is why the Patils need to be here."

Flitwick's heart sank as he looked again at the Indian witch. The dreamy look on her face coupled with Su Li having to check her aura told him volumes. "Ah, I see. If this is what I am sure it is I believe you are right." Flitwick got up and went to his fireplace and tossed some floo powder into it. After a quick discussion with a maid, he returned to his chair.

"Ms. Lovegood, why are you here?" Flitwick finally asked to break the uncomfortable silence.

"Professor, I was the first person Harry asked for help. I was the one who realized there was something terribly wrong with Padma. I was the one who called to Su Li for help. Besides, Padma is my friend; I stand by her."

"Yes, your loyalty does you credit, Ms. Lovegood." Flitwick replied warmly. There were many in Hogwarts, both students and graduates alike who felt he was unaware of what went on in his own house. Little did most realize how there was little Flitwick didn't know about his Ravens. In fact, Ms. Lovegood would surely be surprised to know he knew full well what depths Xenophilius Lovegood had fallen too. Flitwick knew all about the Pureblood bigots, the hazing of the younger years, the teasing of which the likes of Ms. Lovegood had endured. He knew who was sleeping with who and often why. He knew all of these things and rarely interfered.

So many felt him to be disengaged from his own students when in reality his actions were in keeping with his adopted goblin heritage. Flitwick often felt Fredrick Nietzsche must have had goblin friends since his teachings so emulated goblin tradition. Flitwick rarely directly intervened into the affairs of his students because he felt what tested them made them stronger. The last month's behavior by Ms. Lovegood seemed to once again bear out his faith in letting his students learn to deal with adversity on their own. Others might feel him callous to allow so many to be broken by their peers. Those others, Flitwick always thought, weren't goblin born so it mattered little to him.

So Flitwick was well aware of the racism targeted toward Ms. Li and Ms. Patil to say nothing of the teasing and hazing of Ms. Lovegood. However this had forged a bond between the three which gave them

the strength to succeed. To see Ms. Lovegood standing by her friend was no surprise to the charms teacher.

"Ho Hogwarts! May we come through?" came a voice from the fireplace.

"Yes, enter!" Flitwick called back. He was happy to see both Mr. and Mrs. Patil come through. He had a feeling both would be needed if his suspicions were true.

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Harry swallowed nervously as the Patils came through the floo. He wondered if he should continue coming out of the floo like an important lord or go back to being 'Harry Potter' and falling on his face. Director Bones' advice had a lot of merit yet he had always hated floo travel and now that he had the hang of it due to Voldemort's memory Harry was loathed to go back to looking like an idiot. Luckily he didn't have a lot of need to travel by floo so he'd probably be alright. Harry chided himself about thinking on such things considering his floo issues were nothing compared to the problem he had facing him. How would Padma's parents react to what Su Li had found?

Of course it had taken awhile for him to actually find out what the issue was. Su Li had taken awhile to have her aura purged. So much so that the afternoon had turned out to be little more than an orgiastic blur. He had fucked, licked and been sucked for what seemed like hours. He had been immersed in flesh, covered in three witches release and he wasn't sure how many times he had cum but it was enough to leave his cock sore and chafed. Considering how often his aura had flared as he spent over and over into greedy mouths or on hot bodies it had been lucky Luna had the foresight to cast a Somnium Non Somnus spell to keep Padma deeply asleep and shielded from it all. He doubted she would have remained stupified for long if she hadn't.

It had only been after they had all showered and gotten back into their clothes before he had finally gotten some answers. What he learned wasn't going to make talking to Padma's parents any easier. It seemed Padma's joke about his bad karma would be coming home to bite her in her delightfully wonderful arse.

Harry gave himself a small shake as he turned towards the Patils who were walking over to Flitwick. The last thing he needed to be thinking about when talking to her parents was about how much he wanted to watch Padma's arse bounce as he took her from behind!

"Your message said this was urgent, Professor Flitwick. Is there a problem?" Mr. Patil said in a deep voice. Harry could see Mrs. Patil looking at her daughter in confusion. Considering the loopy smile Padma had on her face, Harry wasn't surprised.

"I am afraid there is but I feel it is not my tale to tell. I shall leave it to Lord Black," Flitwick replied with an apologetic bow of his head. He gestured towards Harry.

Harry took a step forward away from the girls and gave a half bow, "Mr. Patil, I apologize I do not know enough about you, your family or your culture to address you properly. I am Lord Harold Potter-Peverell-Black. With me today are my friends who are also friends of your daughter, Ms. Su Li and Ms. Luna Lovegood."

Mr. Patil looked mildly surprised by the greeting as well as the deference he was being shown. "My Lord Black, I am Taluqdar Chandan Patil and this is my wife Eesha. However my title of Taluqdar is not often recognized here in Britain so you may address me as Mr. Patil." The older man smiled, "However if you wish to call me Lord Patil I would not be offended. Now, what is the problem and why is my daughter wearing such an outlandish face? On Parvati I might expect it especially when she gets her Teen Witch Weekly trash, but not my Padma."

Harry bowed again, "Taluqdar Patil I am sorry to inform you your daughter is suffering from a malady that unfortunately I am inadvertently somewhat responsible for. When I was a mere child my magic was bound and only recently after being possessed by the Dark Lord Voldemort was that binding broken." Both Patils gasped but it seemed to Harry that Mrs. Patil's gasp was more than just the response to the Dark Lord's name.

"I have been kept away from the rest of the student body till recently and today is the first time I've seen Padma closely since last term. When I did, she began acting strangely and was quite...forward."

Mr. Patil's eyes narrowed dangerously, "How forward do you mean? Did she..."

Mrs. Patil cut him off, "Lord Black she is entranced by your aura is she not?"

Harry nodded sadly, "I'm afraid she is, Mrs. Patil. When your daughter began to practically throw herself at me I asked my friend Ms. Lovegood here for help since she is good friends with your daughter. She rapidly realized there was probably something more than a prank gone wrong going on. She called in Ms. Li here to examine her aura. This is how we found my aura has captured her."

Mr. Patil looked confused, "Captured her? What is going on?" He looked at Flitwick, "Do you know what they are talking about?"

Flitwick sighed, "I am afraid so Mr. Patil. It is a very rare occurrence but one that does happen often enough to be well documented. Think of Lord Black's aura as being a song or a magical tone. This song is of a certain harmonic. Everyone's aura is like this but most people's aura is too weak to be felt by others. Only very powerful wizards such as Headmaster Dumbledore or Lord Black here can be felt by others."

Mrs. Patil spoke up, "I can feel it."

Mr. Patil shook his head, "I don't feel anything."

Mrs. Patil smiled, "That is because you are not a witch, beloved. Normally auras are felt best by those of the opposite sex. I felt Lord Black's aura almost from the second we came through the floo. It is very powerful and seductive."

"It is Lord Black's aura which has captured your daughter, Mr. Patil." Flitwick went on. "His own aura has its own song, its own harmonic. For reasons which are not clearly understood, when two auras harmonics mesh in a certain way they 'harmonize' and this can create an emotional bond to form. This bond can often be unstable and cause trouble."

Mr. Patil turned to Su Li, "You said you examined her aura; I take it you are an empathic aura reader then?"

Su Li nodded, "Yes I am. It is a trait long held in my family. I knew immediately what had happened when I synched my aura to Padma's. As soon as I did I had an overwhelming desire to...uhm...to..."

Mrs. Patil interrupted, "I understand child; there is no need to elaborate." She gave a curt shake of her head when her husband gave her a questioning look.

Mr. Patil turned back to Harry, "So you have accidentally ensnared my daughter in your aura. What must be done to cure her?"

Harry sighed but before he could speak Luna beat him to it. "There is only one way to cure her Lord Patil. Harry must take her as a bound concubine."

Both Patils looked shocked for a moment. Finally Mr. Patil looked at Harry, "How would binding my daughter in a concubine bond cure her?"

Su Li answered for Harry. "Mr. Patil, right now Harry's aura is in flux. It is quite possible when it finally synchs with his body that the problem would disappear. However Padma can't wait that long. Her own magic is driving her mad with desire to please Harry. She is willing to do anything to please him and Luna tested that and found how far she's willing to go if she thinks it will please him. Right now she thinks nothing of herself. If we didn't have her under a charm she'd probably be trying to rip off his clothes and would take him right in front of us."

"Taluqdar Patil, taking your daughter as a concubine will create a bound between us which will stabilize her aura with mine. While bound to me, she will again be herself. There are two other ways I have been told which could help her but I refuse to do either of these."

"And they are?" Mr. Patil asked neutrally.

"I could take your daughter as a wife or as a consort." Harry said simply.

Mrs. Patil looked at him with a sudden look of anger, "Is my daughter so beneath you, Lord Black, that you cannot see her as a wife or consort?"

Harry held his head high. He looked first at Mrs. Patil and then Mr. Patil straight in the eye. "No Mrs. Patil, it is for Padma I refuse to marry her or take her as my consort. If I take Padma as my concubine I can release her later after my aura stabilizes. Taking her as a wife or a consort is far more permanent. I know Padma and I know she is a proud witch. I would not take her in such a way without her being able to accept or reject me."

Mrs. Patil looked surprised by this but Mr. Patil still looked upset, "Even if you do free her from her bond later many will still see her as soiled. What will you do about that?"

"Taluqdar Patil, I grew up a simple Muggleborn ignorant of magical customs and culture. However I do know a bit of the Indian Muggle culture to have a suggestion. I will set aside in trust for her the amount of galleons Padma would be worth as a bride now. While I personally find the idea of putting a price on a woman repulsive I must respect this is a common practice. Padma is a beautiful witch who is brilliant. With a full bride price at her disposal I'm sure she will be able to find a husband she can be happy with."

Mrs. Patil looked relieved, "What if she decides to stay with you? What then? You are a rich and powerful Lord now."

Harry looked at Luna who smiled encouragingly. He turned back to Padma's parents with a bit more confidence. "Mrs. Patil that is a difficult question to answer. My life is not my own. I have a fate hanging over me in the form of the Dark Lord. He has targeted me since I was a baby. He will not stop until I am dead. Regardless of whether or not you believe he has returned know that I do and I have the scar on my arm to show from where my blood was taken to resurrect him. I shall not rest till he is defeated so my future is very uncertain and thus marriage is not something I think much of."

Harry turned to Mr. Patil, "I will say this, if Padma is willing I would take her as a wife or consort. While I am amazed by it, I find I am allowed three wives and three consorts and am expected to have heirs to all my houses. I know enough of arranged marriages to know they can often work well. I like smart women and Padma is

easily one of the prettiest witches in all of Hogwarts. I've worked with her in class and last year in the group I was training in Defense. She is a good person and I would easily be able to try and make a go of it with her if she was willing. Plus while I care little for bloodlines, I know yours is old and respected. However, it would have to be Padma's choice whether or not to even pursue such a relationship. I am perfectly willing to explore a relationship with her but I will not force her into one. If she chooses to leave after our aura issue is resolved, I will let go in a heartbeat."

The Patils shared a look. Mr. Patil glanced at Su Li and then over to Flitwick, "This bonding will stabilize her?" Seeing Flitwick nod he looked back to Su Li, "And what of my other daughter? She is Padma's twin so why wasn't she affected?"

Su Li shook her head, "Mr. Patil I do not know. I believe she should have been since I have often mistaken Parvati for Padma at a distance due to their auras being almost identical. Why she has not also fallen victim to Harry's aura I have no clue. If anything, I would expect this to have happened to Parvati since she is in Harry's own House and has been exposed to him and his aura, even when it was bound, for much longer."

"I would not look a gift horse in the mouth, beloved. While I feel better about losing our daughter to Lord Black, losing both to such a random thing would be worse." Mrs. Patil said gently.

"True...and Parvati will be easier to find a husband for. She is certainly not as picky as Padma." Mr. Patil looked back at Harry with the ghost of a smile, "You will find living up to Padma's expectations to be an arduous task."

Harry returned the smile, "I don't know how much your daughters have told you of my best friend Hermione Granger but rest assured I'm used to what a smart, determined witch with firm opinions expects out of me."

From behind him, Harry heard Padma give a sigh which sounded like, "Haaaarrrrry"

"My spell is wearing off, Harry. I think you need to bind her quickly unless you want to have Padma jump you while her parents are here." Luna said with a mischievous twinkle in her eye.

"Taluqdar Patil? I give you my word as Lord Potter-Peverell-Black I will have the goblins create a trust fund for your daughter as soon as possible. I shall have Narcissa Black coordinate the bride price. She would know more of what your daughter's bridal worth is than I and I will make sure she knows I want her to have what is due her."

Mr. Patil nodded and walked to his daughter. He stopped for a moment and looked at Harry with a sudden suspicious look. "You will not lend her out will you?"

Harry blinking a bit at this. "Uhm...lend her out?"

Luna reached out and put her hand on his arm, "Harry please remember how I told you about certain unsavory aspects of Wizarding culture? Well letting a friend borrow a concubine is a very common thing among wealthy lords. Mr. Patil wants to know if you might let someone like Neville have a go at Padma for the night as a favor perhaps."

"What?" Harry exclaimed.

"I am not saying Neville would do that but I would not put it past some others here at Hogwarts. Concubines in many cultures have a much higher status than they do here in Britain. Here they are often seen as mere sex toys. Many concubines became so to pay off debts, avoid House War as you well know and often are taken by force in times of conflict. They are rarely looked upon as more than your personal slave to be given out at your whim." Luna explained patiently.

Harry turned to Padma's father, "Taluqdar Patil, your daughter is not a party favor and I would never do such a thing! The only time I could even conceive of such a thing is if your daughter asks me for permission to be with another. She is not my slave nor will she ever be so! This binding is for her health and sanity and I refuse to use it as an excuse to abuse her."

Mr. Patil gave a slight bow, "Then Lord Black I find myself thankful that Padma's karma was to be bound to you. I doubt there are many others other than young Lord Longbottom who would be as chivalrous as you." He took his daughters left hand and motioned for Harry to take Padma's other hand in his.

"Lord Harold Potter-Peverell-Black, I Taluqdar Chandan Patil offer up my daughter Padma Patil to be your concubine for a fair price to be agreed on later. Do you accept my offer of my daughter?" Mr. Patil's voice was firm but everyone could tell he was feeling the emotion of the moment.

"Taluqdar Chandan Patil, I so accept the gracious offer of your daughter to be my concubine. May the bride-price between our two houses ensure peace and good will. I shall hold her close to my heart and she shall be as one with my wives and consorts." Harry responded, once again thankful that Voldemort had been a voracious reader of the magical customs of England. Of course Harry knew the traditional mantra was almost never upheld considering what he'd just learned about how concubines were normally treated.

Padma suddenly gasped and her eyes flew open. She looked deep into Harry's eyes before realizing her father was holding her hand while everyone else looked on.

"Uhm...did I miss something?" Padma said in a small voice.

XxXxX

INFIRMARY, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th – AFTERNOON

Ron lay in the bed Madam Pomfrey had put him in and fumed. That he was able to do so after she had given him a Calming Draught was a testament to the rage which burned within him. However Madam Pomfrey was just outside the ward he was in so Ron was trapped. All he could do was brood and listen to the older witch talking to some 4th year Hufflepuff about some rash he was having.

Bloody bastards! None of them could see Potter for what he truly was. Ron couldn't understand why. Ron had been Potter's best mate for years and if anyone should know the most about him it would be him! It wasn't till his 5th year did Ron begin to see Potter for what he was and what he'd become.

It had started when he had spent the summer at...at...at that place wherever that was. He had come down to the kitchens after being woken up by something (probably Tonks leaving and waking up Mrs.

Black) and overheard Sirius and Remus talking about Harry's money. Luckily the Twins had some of their extendable ears hidden around the house for just such occasions and so Ron was able to listen in to what they were saying as if he was sitting at the table with them.

What Ron had learned had dumbfounded him: Harry was filthy stinking rich. Much of the food and drink he loved so much at Hogwarts came from farms and breweries Potter owned. From what he overheard, Potter had enough money to make even Malfoy respect him. The fact Sirius and Remus seemed concerned over something going on in regards to the Potter fortune didn't really penetrate into Ron's consciousness. All he could think of was how Potter was a fraud.

Everything about him had to be a total lie. Living with those Muggles, the tattered clothes, the broken glasses were all just a scam to hide Potter's money. He was hiding how rich he was and worse he had the gall, the balls to come into Ron's own home and suck up his own mother's love under the guise of a poor, lonely orphan. Oh yes, Ron had finally seen that the Boy-Who-Lived was more than he seemed!

Then there were all the girls. There always had been girls who got all googly-eyed over the green-eyed git. Ron had always just written them off as Boy-Who-Lived groupies. He saw enough of that in his stupid sister growing up. Why his mother ever wasted a knut on those stupid BWL books for Ginny Ron could never understand. However this had all changed once Harry started teaching the D.A. and now it was pretty much every bird looking at Potter like he was God's gift to witches!

He had heard quite a few of the other blokes talk about it. Ron himself had tried to chat up quite a few witches and every time he'd ask one out to Hogsmeade they would always ask if Harry was coming! Playing the pity card as the poor lonely orphan obviously worked for Potter in hoodwinking witches it seemed to Ron. He had slowly started to hate his best mate. Every D.A. meeting began to be a torture to him. Ron would almost gag watching all the devoted looks on all those cows too stupid to realize Potter was playing them!

About the only decent thing that had come about during last term was catching Nigel Wespurt jerking off some Hufflepuff whose name Ron could never remember. Ron couldn't help but grin at the look of

horror on Nigel's face at being caught. So Nigel became Ron's dirty little secret, his own personal release valve. Until he could figure out a way to prove to everyone what a fraud Potter was and finally show the witches how foolish they'd been fawning over him, well Nigel's bum would have to do.

It never occurred to Ron to think on the irony of him always accusing Harry of being gay since he never went out with girls while he himself was bugging the little 3rd year boy. It didn't really register on him. Nigel was just something owed to him for having to put up with being 'Potter's Shadow' and he'd dump the little titch the moment the girls realized how Potter had tricked him. Then he'd be the one with all the witches!

"So much for the so called 'Golden Trio' eh Weasley?"

Ron almost squeaked in surprise as he looked up see Draco Malfoy leaning on one of the beds just inside the privacy curtain.

"What do you want, ferret-face?" Ron snarled. "Where is Madam Pomfrey?"

"What I want is something I believe you want, Weasley," Draco said easily. "As for the Nurse, well I convinced her she needed to be elsewhere for a bit."

"Oh just because I get in a fight with Potter you suddenly think I'm going to join your little group of Death Nibblers? Maybe your Dad forgot to mention how he and his buddies along with your aunt were doing their best to kill me last June!" Ron said hotly.

Draco made a dismissive gesture, "Look Weasley I quite frankly don't give a shit what you think. You come from low stock and always have and I've said so quite often. I did so recently and had it pointed out to me you Weasleys have historically been allied with certain Houses which have done little to advance them."

"This matters to me how, snake?" Ron said coldly.

Draco smiled, "It matters because there is one thing that transcends the Dark Lord or Dumbledore or all of that crap and that is one's House. House Weasley has been allied with the likes of the Longbottoms, the Bones and the Potters for generations. What has

it gotten you? You and your family are dirt poor while the other Houses have vaults filled with galleons. How have they helped you and your House?"

Ron gritted his teeth. He hated it anytime Draco made sense. There had been quite a few times when the slimy git had taunted Harry when Ron found himself agreeing with the ponce. "What do you want, Malfoy?"

"I want you to start thinking about your House. Whether you like it or not there is change in the wind. Change you might want to start thinking about getting on the right side of. Oh I'm sure you are going whip out the lame excuse about how the Light won and Potty has defeated the Dark Lord before. Well let me ask you this, Weasley, if the Light is doing so well why is it my father is already out of Azkaban?" Draco said with a smirk.

Ron was silent and just glared at the Slytherin.

"He's out because galleons talk Weasley. While the Dark Lord was away it was my father who was practically the Minister himself! Even if Potty were to somehow work a miracle and defeat the Dark Lord tomorrow, where does that leave you and your House? Still dirt poor and it still leaves Houses like mine in power and really running things. So regardless of what happens with the Dark Lord, it is galleons which make the world go round. The Dark Lord wins and House Malfoy wins. If the Dark Lord is defeated, House Malfoy will retreat, regroup and in the end we'll be back running things just like we did after the first war. You? You'll still be degnoming your little scrub of land and scrimping while your so called allies laugh at you from their mansions!" Draco said with his trademarked sneer.

"I said it before, Malfoy, what do you want." Ron said but with a lot less heat this time.

"I told you Ronald. Don't be so thick you stupid Gryffindor! I want you to stop thinking in terms of Light and Dark and start looking at our world as it is. You may be as thick as an ox but you are a Pureblood! Your House should be ones helping run England instead of Houses like the Abbots, Greengrasses, and Potters! Again I ask you what has House Weasley ever gotten for all they have done for the so called Light? Most of your clan is in poverty and from things I've overheard from my parents is that the only reason you and

siblings are even here at Hogwarts is because Dumbledore paid for it to happen."

A very ugly thought flickered into Ron's brain. A thought which made the bile rise in his throat.

Draco smiled as if he could read the terrible thought in Ron's mind. "Oh yes, what could your family have done to merit such a payoff? Maybe it was to bring in Harry Potter and use your family as a cover. Poor orphaned Potter befriended by suffering Pureblood family. How noble, how story-book wonderful...and how fucking manipulative! What has your family gained from Dumbledore's schemes? You sister almost died, your dad almost died and you almost died all because your family accepted galleons they needed because they continue to pick the wrong allies! Bloody hell Weasley two of your own brothers fled the country to get away from Dumbledore and Percy openly denounces him!"

Ron grimaced at how much sense Draco was making. "So you expect me to just go skipping to You-Know-Who and get marked?"

Draco's eye's narrowed in rage but then visibly calmed himself. "Look Weasley believe it or not this has nothing to do with the Dark Lord. This is about Potter. He and people like Dumbledore have used you and your family. He's been using you since day one and your family has suffered for it. For my part I am through with his insults to my families honor. He must die!"

Ron couldn't help but be surprised by this. "I thought your boss wants Potter alive. I heard your dad say it to Bellatrix last June."

Draco pulled up his shirt to reveal his bare left arm. It was unblemished. "Does this look like I care what the Dark Lord thinks? My family may follow his cause but House Malfoy will suffer Potter's insults to our blood no longer! Now I come to you not as a follower of the Dark Lord but as one who has been wronged by House Potter just as you have been. I already overheard Pomfrey talking about having you transferred to St Mungo's for a week or two. Who's going to look after your sister while your gone? With that life-debt she's probably going to be on her knees sucking his cock before you're even gotten half-way to London."

Ron's rage once again began to fight the Calming Draught he had been forced to take. Ginny! The stupid girl was practically begging for Potter to shag her. After he'd soiled her then where would she be? Of all the Weasley's she had a chance to marry well and she seemed hell bent to give up her most precious asset to Harry fucking Potter!"

"Oh and I'm sure after Harry's had his turn he'll probably turn her over to Longbottom. That boy is so clueless he'll never get a shag. He's been making sickening cow eyes at your sister ever since the Yule Ball. You sure you want your sister to be having her butt shoved into the manure in the greenhouses as old Nevy ploughs your sisters fields?" Draco asked nastily.

"What do you fucking want from me Malfoy?" Ron practically shouted.

Draco leaned in towards him. "I want you to help me kill Harry Potter. In return, while you are away I'll keep the bloody bastard away from your precious Ginny. Oh sure I may have to get her tossed into detention or something but I'll manage. Then when they finally let you out of St. Mungo's we can work together and get revenge for both our Houses. You do this for me and I will not forget it Weasley. Like I said, your family hasn't had much luck with the allies of the past. Maybe it is time you made a change? Of course unless you like being poor and the joke of Britain when you should be part of the ruling elite!" Draco said genially and then held out his hand.

Ron thoughts were filled with Harry laughing while he fucked Ginny in the Gryffindor locker hot tub as she sobbed. Then there was the disgusting image of Neville thrusting and groaning in the dirt, soiling his sister forever."

Ron reached out and shook Draco's hand. "I'm in!"

XxXxX

A/N: This chapter and the next will probably be shorter than some of mine. I figured it was better to have more smaller chapters that I can get posted than have two really long ones. I was going to make this chapter longer but I think this was a good spot to end it.

Taluqdar: An Indian title of minor nobility of land owners. I'm thinking it is probably equivalent to an English Baron.

Spells: Google Translate, a boon for spell writers everywhere!

Tunica Natalis = Birthday Suit =)~

Somnium Non Somnus = Dreamless sleep

Seraglio: For those who don't know it, a seraglio is where concubines are kept. It is also another term often used for where a harem is kept. Oh...and for some reason in the first draft of this, my spell-checker screwed this word up TWICE! Man I miss the grammar/spell-checker from the old 1994 Multimate 3.0.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – JAW-JAW IS BETTER THAN WAR-WAR

LORD BLACK'S PRIVATE SUITE, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 5th – LATE AFTERNOON

"So we're married?" Padma asked.

Harry's heart turned over at the plaintive tone in the Indian witch's voice. Even with all the discussion back at Flitwick's office she still seemed in a fog.

"No but I intend to treat you as if I were." Harry said gently. Then he frowned, "Actually Padma that isn't really true. I will treat you like we're married if that is what you wish. Like I told your father, you may be my concubine but I will not force you to do anything. If you want to continue sleeping in your dorm room, hang out with your friends, eat at the Ravenclaw table and completely ignore what has happened till my aura stabilizes then that is what is going to happen."

"I doubt people will allow her to just ignore what has happen Harry," Su Li said sadly.

"I know but it is her choice not mine," Harry replied.

Padma shook her head, "It is all so much to take in. The last thing I remember clearly was Ron saying something awful to you and then suddenly you were my entire world. I shamed myself in front of you and then Luna! I was even willing to...to..."

Padma blushed and looked away. Harry knew exactly what she was thinking she had been willing to do. "I'm sorry about that Padma. Luna was only trying to help."

Padma looked up with a hint of a smile at Luna who was sitting next to Harry on the couch, "I know she was. I would be the last one to be surprised by Luna's unorthodox methods of problem solving. But the last thing I would have thought of upon waking up this morning would be that I would be a concubine by dinner! Truly this is not what I thought my karma would be."

"I guess your karma got run over by Harry's dogma," Lilith joked.

Everyone groaned. "Lilith this isn't a laughing matter! Do you think I like having to bind Padma?" Harry said in a pained voice.

"Chill out Mr. Grim!" Lilith shot back. "Okay no one likes it but it happened and now we have to deal with it. I know you're not going to take advantage of her and so does Luna. I don't know how Su Li's aura radar works but I'm betting she's gotten a pretty good feel for you. So Padma's got three witches to vouch for you."

Padma laid her hand on Harry's, "Lilith may joke but it is true. It is my karma to be tied to you. To fight this will only bring me pain and shame to my family. You did this to save me and I...well I thank you from the bottom of my heart you did so as to give me a choice. It is far more than I could have expected especially back in India. My mother Eesha was the first in her line to marry without a prearrangement between families in living memory. I am still ahead of many of my cousins back in India."

Harry's face softened. "Well I guess if you haven't seen it from our times in the D.A. I do tend have a tendency to brood on things."

"Yes, they don't call you 'Emo McBroodypants' for nothing," Luna said with a evil smile.

"What?" Harry exclaimed as Lilith broke into a fit of laughter.

"Oh man, I had forgotten that nickname!" Lilith said after a second. "It came about because Hannah liked to comment how emo you can be and Susan once joked about how you were wearing your 'broody pants' and somehow Emo McBroodypants was born."

All of the girls began to giggle at the look on Harry's face. "We need to see about cheering you up, Harry. First Mr. Grim and now Emo McBroodypants. I must say, oh Boy-Who-Lived, you need to get better nicknames!" Luna quipped.

"I, Lord Harold Potter-Peverell-Black, state the name of 'Emo McBroodypants' is here-by banned in my rooms!" Harry said imperiously.

Lilith stuck her tongue out at him, "Come on Harry, don't prove Hannah and Susan's point!"

"Yes Harry, you should be happy, today is sort of your wedding day. We should have some pudding to celebrate!" Luna said brightly.

Before Harry could reply, Isla Black spoke up from the portrait behind him. "My lord, a Professor McGonagall requests your presence. She is here to escort you to the Headmaster's office. She seems a bit...agitated, my lord."

Harry groaned, "I knew this was coming but I'm really starting to hate having to end up in the Headmaster's office listening to them give me a pasting."

Padma watched as Harry got up, "Do you want me to come with you?" She asked softly.

Harry shook his head, "No, if you would I would like you to stay here. Luna, Lilith and Narcissa have some information I'd like you to hear." Harry turned to Su Li, "I owe you a great debt for what you did for Padma. If I could put upon you a bit more, I would like it if you could listen in as well."

"Well I must say the sex-fest was pretty good payment for the risk!" Su Li said with a happy smile before she saw the serious looks on Luna's and Lilith's faces. She before turned back to Harry. "Okay so something is going on here beyond what happened to Smith?"

Luna nodded. "A lot more!" She said cryptically.

Su Li was silent for a moment before breaking into a big smile, "This sounds mysterious! Great, I love solving mysteries! Very well, Lord Black, I shall hang around. Besides, I'm not about to turn my back on my friends any more than Luna would."

"Thank you for that. Right now I'm knee-deep in mysteries and I'll take all the help I can get. Padma, just remember you can go back to your dorm room or you can stay in the spare bedroom. Whatever you feel most comfortable with. I'm not going to force you into anything. Hopefully I won't be too long." Harry said without much confidence in his own prediction.

Harry walked over to the portal. As he expected when it opened he was facing a very irritated head of House Gryffindor.

"Mr. Black...what have you gone and done this time?" She demanded.

Harry sighed; it was going to be another long session in the Headmaster's office.

GREAT HALL, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 5th – EVENING

Draco Malfoy chewed on his mouthful of pork-chop while tuning out whatever Pansy was nattering on about. He continued to look over at where Potter would normally eat. So far the Gryffindor hadn't made an appearance. While he might be eating in his own rooms, Draco was sure he'd show tonight in a show of 'normality' after Smith's murder.

Draco had mixed feelings about Smith's death. On one hand Smith had been part of Potter's defense group but on the other he was from a respected Pureblood house. It bothered him someone would try to frame Potter with one of that blood instead of using one of the many mudblood scum available. Nott had gone on and on about how Potter had probably been the one to kill him but Draco dismissed that. Like Dumbledore's Golden Boy would every stoop to using Dark Arts to kill someone with!

No, there was obviously another player out there. There were plenty of old enemies of the Blacks who might want to frame Potter. Of course it might also mean the Dark Lord had other plans going on. As much as it pained him to think about it, Draco doubted he and his father were being told very much of the Dark Lord's plans considering his anger at House Malfoy of late.

Draco had to smile at the thought of all that work to frame Potter was going to come to naught after Draco's cat's-paw killed him. Then after so many centuries House Malfoy would be truly victorious over the hated House Potter. Draco had often wondered if his hair would change color after Potter's death. He thought he'd look rather dashing with the dark hair of House Black since he was confident he would have the same hair as his mother.

Of course thinking about his mother just made killing Potter all the more important. He needed him dead quickly so he could finally become the true Lord Black before his mother was killed by the Dark Lord. Since Draco could not overtly attack Potter if he wanted to

succeed him as Lord Black it would fall to Ron Weasley to do the deed. While it would be the ginger git who dealt the final blow, it would be through House Malfoy's plans!

Something Pansy said finally registered to Draco, "I'm sorry Pansy; what was that last bit?"

Pansy looked at him with a pained expression. It was obvious to him she'd realized he hadn't been listening. "I just said you need to do something soon or you are not going have any pull left in our House. Nott is already pushing to take over your spot especially since he got your prefect badge. Then there are all the neutrals. They've pretty much come out into the open. They might even start going to Potter's little defense group."

"I've got bigger plans than to worry about a bunch of kids in Slytherin House. I can't afford to be distracted." Draco said dismissively. He went back to covertly looking for Potter. Thus he didn't see the calculating look on Pansy's face or the anger in her eyes.

Draco glanced down the table and saw Blaise, Tracey and Daphne sitting together. As always it seemed that Blaise and Tracey were talking while Daphne sat there like the broken toy she was. Draco looked forward to the day when he would be able to openly kill the Jamaican bitch and take Daphne for his own. As if he would stay with a slag like Parkinson! She was just a convenient spam purse for his own needs when he wasn't able to procure the tight bum of a younger wizard. Yes so many things would be easier after Dumbledore was dead at his hands.

Draco smiled to himself at Weasley's naïveté. As if showing a bare arm proved anything! His Dark Mark was safely hidden by spells which could only be cracked by an intensive search by aurors knowing what to look for. Even Alastor Moody's magical eye couldn't see it! Did the ginger fool think that Death Eaters never took off their shirts or went swimming? The only reason so many Death Eaters had escaped after the last war was his father had kept the needed search from being performed on their arms. After some galleons passed hands it was just a matter of signing a 'confession' of being under the imperious curse and then rolling up one's sleeve to show it 'bare' and they had been free to go.

As Draco gloated to himself how clever his father had been after the war he didn't notice Pansy move away from him and start to talk to Gina Walker.

OoOoO

Harry's stomach gave an angry growl as the smells of the Great Hall hit him. He had planned to eat back in his room but he really needed something to tie him over. Plus Harry needed to talk to Katie and wanted to spend some time with Neville. He hoped Hermione would be there as well and wouldn't be too put off about what had happened during the day so now would be a good time to check in with her as well. As it happened Katie was leaving with her friend Leanne Cresswell as he came in.

"Hey Katie, could I talk to you for a second?" Harry asked. He motioned for her to step back out where the diners couldn't see them.

Katie smiled warmly, "I always have time for you Harry! I'll catch up with you later, Leanne. Don't forget to bring my darts, okay?" The Hufflepuff nodded and left leaving the two alone.

"Darts?" Harry asked.

"Oh a bunch of us Muggleborn and raised have a bit of a dart tournament going on. Always a good idea to keep up on your pub game practice!" Katie said while miming throwing a dart. "So what's up? Did you hear back from the Nimbus Company?"

Harry shook his head, "Not yet but I also haven't seen my aide tonight. No, I wanted to tell I have to cancel on you tomorrow. Something rather huge has come up and I need to deal with it."

"Is it something bad?" Katie asked with evident concern.

Harry ran his hand through his hair nervously. "I'm not sure yet. It's big and I'm sort of surprised it hasn't gotten out yet. By tomorrow I'm sure it will be. After the whole thing with Smith and then my fight with Ron, well this might be the straw that breaks the thestral's back. I want to be able to have a good talk with you without all that hanging over me."

Katie looked at him for a moment and then shrugged. "Well actually I think this is for the best. Professor McGonagall came to me earlier and gave me a talking to that I need to pass on to the rest of the team. So I don't think tomorrow's practice is going to be fun. Considering how Ron and Ginny are responsible for it might make tomorrow a good day for you not to be there."

Katie grimaced and leaned over to whisper in Harry's ear, "Although I must say I wish you could be there. I don't know if you've heard by Ron is being sent back to St. Mungo's. With Ron off to hospital I have to let MacLaggen on as keeper. Seeing how fast you were with a wand I might need you to stun me before I kill the berk."

"So are Tuesday practices still on? I should be able to make it to that especially since I will take everyone's advice and return to my slot as seeker if you'll have me." Harry said.

Katie laughed, "Like I'd turn you down. Sure Natalie won't like being bumped down to reserve but that's the way the quaffle bounces. What changed your mind?"

"Well the incident today really is just another in a series of weird things that has been going on in my life. They are coming faster now and I need something simple in my life. Right now I can use a bit of 'fly fast, dodge bludgers, catch the snitch' since it's straightforward and uncomplicated." Harry said with a sigh.

Katie winked at him, "Plus we do have the best hot tubs in Hogwarts!" She leaned over and kissed him on the cheek. The kiss was a lot longer than it had to be for a friendly peck. "Welcome back to the team, Harry. I've really missed you." Katie whispered into his ear.

She leaned back, "So I'll see you on Tuesday then?"

Harry nodded dumbly. He had forgotten how wonderful Katie smelled. He wasn't sure if it was her, her perfume, her hair products or all three. It brought back good memories of simpler times. That and very special private times together.

As Katie turned to leave Harry spoke up, "Uhm, Katie when today's incident gets out I want you to know...well I just want you to know I had no choice."

Katie looked at Harry in confusion. There was definitely more than a hint of shame and regret in the wizard's words. She just looked into Harry's eyes for a bit and then nodded and left.

Harry sighed as he watched her go. For some reason he was really worried how Katie would take the news of him bonding to Padma. He knew he should worry more about how Hermione would act to say nothing of Parvati or Lavender. Of course he would find out soon enough about that as he made his way to the Gryffindor table.

Spying Neville and Hermione at the end of the table surprised him. Normally his year had staked out a spot near the center closer to the teacher's table. The ends tended to be taken up by the 7th years (closer to the doors) and the Firsties (closer to the teachers) with the rest taking up the rest. As Harry neared the table he noticed how the rest of the table seemed to be mostly ignoring the two and there was a definite space separating the duo from the rest of the table.

"Hey guys, what's up with you two? Too good to sit with our year now that you're prefects?" Harry joked lightly.

"Ah the arch-troublemaker emerges!" Neville deadpanned.

"Yes we had better watch him because he's obviously a nutter," Hermione said with a bitter tone.

"Uh-oh...let me guess. Problems in Gryffindor? I take it has to do with me?"

"Whenever has it not been about you Harry?" Hermione said crossly.

"She didn't mean it like that Harry," Neville said quickly at the look of surprise and hurt on Harry's face.

Hermione looked a bit guilty, "I'm sorry Harry. "It's just there is a lot of conflicting things going on right now and yes many revolve around you. I just gets me down how quickly people turn on you. I didn't mean to take it out on you."

Harry nodded. He hadn't been to the Gryffindor common room since last term so he could only imagine what was going on. Even so he didn't think his fellow Lions would be so rattled.

Seeing the look on Harry's face, Neville gestured down the table where most of the rest of the Gryffindors tried to pretend they weren't covertly watching Harry. "Look mate, in the span of less than two days, you've shown back up leading the Muggleborns, got your own room as an important lord. Then Smith gets himself murdered and then we had the whole thing with Ron. This on top of the Daily Prophet spending the last four months continuing to harp how deranged you are. Then there is still the fight you had in London. They all don't know what to think."

"Why should the fight in London matter?" Harry asked in confusion.

"Harry for someone famous for supposedly killing Voldemort, you'd think people wouldn't be surprised you killed some Death Eaters. Well a lot of people, mostly Gryffindors, took the news you killed four people badly." Hermione said. "I don't know why they think that other than I believe too many people see you as that hero from the B-W-L book series. Have you seen them?"

Harry nodded, "Yeah Ron showed me Ginny's copies awhile back. They were pretty bad." Harry had gagged how cheesy they had been. The early one were barely above Dr. Seuss books he had read as a child to the later ones which seemed to be a bad magical rip-off of the Redwall series.

Hermione nodded, "Yes they were very simplistic stories using you to tell moral tales. Trouble is now people are seeing the real you and the real you is a lot different than the literary one. You've had to do some pretty nasty things just to stay alive and it is throwing some people for a loop. I think once again people can't separate the fiction created around you and the real you."

Harry rubbed his scar out of habit. He knew if he still had the horcrux in his head it would be throbbing right about now. "Okay so should I stay out of the Gryffindor common room? Am I going to get hexed in the halls?"

Neville gave a hollow laugh, "No it isn't that bad. We're sort of back to where we were at the beginning of 5th Year. People like Seamus have fallen back into the 'you're a nutter' idea and then there is a lot of hype over Smith's death and you hitting Ron. Never mind the jealous git had it coming. Again I guess kicking your one time best

mate in the stones is not something the Boy-Who-Lived should be doing according to most people."

"Heaven forbid I deviate from the script and live my own life," Harry said sourly.

"Exactly! I keep telling people this and they look at me like I'm speaking troll or something" Hermione said. "Plus once again Quidditch is turning out to be a big problem. Right now all the issues with Ginny, Ron and you are causing people to talk and jump to conclusions. Neville and I saw Katie coming out of Professor McGonagall's office when we had to do our prefect report. I think she got an earful from the look on her face. Already this is causing some people to jump to conclusions and she hasn't even said anything yet!" Hermione said in exasperation.

"Yeah Katie did get an earful from McGonagall. I talked to her right before I got here and apparently the Weasley's are on thin ice and the rest of the team gets to a repeat of the sermon tomorrow. Plus if MacLaggen is as disruptive on the pitch as he is in the tower I'm guessing a lot of people are worried about our chances at the Cup." Harry said thoughtfully.

"So are you going to go back to being a seeker? That might help a bit." Neville asked.

"I am going to try. Like I told Katie, I think a little bit of normality is something I really need in my life right now." Harry said. Both Hermione and Neville nodded at this.

"So...beyond all the fun and excitement of being accused of murder and being attacked by Ron, how's your day been going? I haven't seen you around since the end of the meeting this morning." Neville said with a grin.

Harry sighed, "Look I'll tell you but you have to promise you don't leap up and yell something like 'what!' and draw attention to us." Harry looked pointedly at Hermione as he said this.

The two prefects shared a look. "Okay, I was just making a joke. You're telling me something else has happened?" Neville said cautiously.

"To paraphrase Hermione, when doesn't something happen to me?" Harry said. He looked down the table and saw everyone was still covertly watching them. He noticed a lot of the Hufflepuffs in the next table over were as well. Harry drew his wand and cast the Muffliato spell he had learned from Narcissa. The next time he saw Snape he'd have to thank the git for such a useful spell.

"Okay, we can talk now. So Hermione are you ready not to freak out?" He waited till Hermione nodded. "Well Neville I don't know how much Hermione has been able to tell you but I have had my magic bound since I was two. It got unbound during the fight at the Ministry. So I'm having some problems related to that."

"Blimey Harry! All this time you've been at half power!" Neville's eyes were practically bugging out at the news.

"Yes and I think you might also be bound. Sometime sooner rather than later I want you to come by my room so we can check you out. If it is true, we'll break the bond together and I'll be able to tell you why." Harry said earnestly.

Neville look stunned while Hermione looked pensive. "Is this related to the info the Headmaster gave you last June?" Hermione asked.

Harry nodded. "Yes I think it does. However beyond having to deal with trying to synch my magic in months when I should have had years, I ran afoul of another issue with my aura today right after I had my fight with Ron."

"This isn't about how you...drain yourself is it?" Hermione said guardedly with a hint of distaste on her face.

"No it isn't. Look there isn't an easy way to say this but somehow my aura and Padma Patil's merged. I've been told is something can happen to anyone especially if their magic is in a state of flux like mine is right now. It's rare but it happens so with my luck it just had to happen to me," Harry said.

Hermione let out a startled gasp but Neville just looked confused. "Merged? What does that mean?" Neville asked.

"It means Harry's aura is affecting Padma's. It can affect her mind and cause all sorts of problems! Is she alright Harry?" Hermione asked worriedly.

"Yes, yes she is. Padma sort of ambushed me after I had the fight with Ron and she was acting really weird. At first I thought maybe someone had dosed her with one of the Weasley products as a joke. I got her back to my room before I realized something was seriously not right. Luna agreed when she showed up since she knows Padma a lot better. So she called in Su Li of Ravenclaw who is an aura reader of all things. She was able to figure out what was wrong with Padma. Then the problem was what we had to do in order to stabilize Padma's aura before it started to affect her mind permanently."

"Was it hard?" Neville asked.

"No. The process was actually pretty easy. It is just the ramifications of healing her are going to raise some eyebrows." Harry said. He was having a hard time just coming out and saying what had happened.

"Wait a minute, if your aura is still in flux due to being unbound this means Padma would really be affected. Fixing it would require...would require..." Hermione's voice trailed off as the implications hit her.

"Fixing it would require me to bond to her to stabilize her aura. That is what I had to do." Harry said simply. Hermione continued to look at him in shock.

"Bond her how Harry?" Neville said quietly.

"I took her as a bound concubine. Now before you two freak out, I did this for her. The only other way to bind her was to take her as a wife or consort. Like I told Padma's mother, it isn't like that would be a bad thing but it is rather permanent. As a concubine, as soon as my aura stabilizes, I can release her and she can move on with her life." Harry said.

Neville shook his head in worry, "Oh man Harry this is going to be bad. Okay I can see your reasoning for why you did what you did but do you know how concubines are seen in England?"

Harry nodded sadly, "Yeah. Luna clued me in how concubines are usually seen merely as sex toys. Padma's dad even asked me if I was going to loan her out."

Hermione blinked at this. Neville cut in, "Hermione it was a valid question. Lots of lords have concubines and they get...passed around a lot." Neville looked at Harry. "You know there are going to be blokes who are going to ask you to share."

"I know and hopefully I'll keep from beating them up like I did Ron. I took Padma as a concubine to cure her and give her a choice. I'll take the Dark Mark before I treat her like some sex doll to be passed around." Harry said.

"So as a concubine is Padma...married to you?" Hermione asked with a funny catch in her voice.

"Pretty much. I've already told her she can stay with me in the spare bedroom or stay in the dorms. It is up to her what she wants to do. I'm not going to order her to do anything. Come on Hermione, I have a hard enough time getting Dobby and Winky not to do everything for me. I'm not about to treat Padma worse. Just because she's a concubine doesn't mean she's any less of a witch in my eyes."

"What if she wants to stay with you?" Hermione asked softly.

Harry's shoulders sagged. "I already told her family how I've got this thing with Voldemort. However I can't just stop living. Besides, if she elects to stay with me...well as much as I can't believe it, I'm going to be expected to take three wives to produce heirs for my houses. I can live with the idea of Padma being one of them."

"That on top of the offers you'll get for consorts." Neville said thoughtfully. "I mean for people like Susan, Luna, Hannah or even Pansy and Daphne over in Slytherin being a consort to you would be a smart move politically. Plus, I hate to say this Harry but the fact you are being so good about this just makes you even more desirable to a potential consort."

"Why is that Neville?" Hermione asked. She really didn't know as much about Magical customs as she probably should.

"Well look at what Harry did. He took Padma as a concubine so she could make a choice later. So obviously Harry cares for what she thinks. Most purebloods will think Harry is being stupid. He could have bound Padma as a wife, gotten a break in the bride-price and made an alliance with the Patil's in one stroke. That he didn't will tell girls like Susan that Harry cares how they feel. You have to understand Hermione must consorts don't get a lot of attention. Pretty much all a witch really expects out of the consort bond deal is children. Many times that is about all the get."

Understanding dawned on Hermione. "Okay I think I see. Witches aren't allowed to have lovers and mess around on the side. So Harry showing he'd actually care for his consorts then that would be a plus."

Neville nodded, "Exactly. You'd expect a consort, being the head of her house, could have a lover but that's not how things work in England. Most other places it is, but not here. Not to say those witches don't take lover but it is a big scandal if it comes out."

"It is all hypocrisy," Harry said echoing Luna's view of magical Britain. "Of course in most other places concubines aren't seen as sex toys either," Harry said.

"How is Padma taking it?" Hermione asked.

Harry sighed, "Well she's pretty gobsmacked as you can expect. I got dragged up to the Headmasters office pretty fast after it all happened. I wanted to give her some space to decide what she wants to do. Between my aura and our bond I don't think she can truly make an informed choice with me around."

"What did the Headmaster want, Harry?" Hermione asked guardedly.

"Oh the usual. He needed to tell how disappointed he was about the situation. How I should have come to him first and all that. Like talking to him would have changed the facts. I told him it was a family matter and not something the headmaster of Hogwarts needed to be involved in. Of course regardless of the fact it was a done deal and Taluqdar Patil agreed to it didn't get me out of spending about an hour listening to Dumbledore and McGonagall going on about it. I think even Professor Flitwick was about to go off on Dumbledore after a bit."

"Harry, I...I told the Headmaster I wasn't going to...watch over you anymore." Hermione said as she looked down at her plate unable to meet his eyes.

"No worries, Hermione. It was another thing I got yelled at for. However Narcissa was right. People like Malfoy could force the issue and make me take you or any other witch the Headmaster has checking up on me as a concubine. I had to take Padma for her sanity; I'll be damned if I let someone like Lucius Malfoy make me take my best friend as a concubine." Harry said hotly. Hermione's face lit up at this.

Harry's stomach growled again. He belatedly realized his food hadn't appeared. He thought about it before he realized he had told Dobby to tell the Hogwarts elves not to feed him. He wanted his own elves to prepare his food. He called for Dobby and soon enough his food showed up.

Both Neville and Hermione were quiet while he ate. They both seemed to be lost in thought. Finally Neville spoke up, "Hey Harry, could you do us a favor?"

Harry swallowed some meat pie, "Sure mate. What is it?"

"Could you try and not cause havoc tomorrow? I mean stay in bed or something. Once this gets out it is going to be a mess." Neville said with a glum look.

Harry couldn't help but grin slyly. "I think I might be able to be coaxed into staying in bed all day. I'll figure out some way to keep myself amused."

Hermione's snort left no doubt at her thought on that plan.

GREAT HALL, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 6th – EVENING

Harry couldn't help but covertly rub his aching crotch as he watched students come and go from the Great Hall. If Lilith was right about him having succubae blood in him, he wondered how incubae kept from shagging their dicks raw. Yesterday's bout with Luna, Lilith and Su Li had made him almost willing to go see Madam Pomfrey and deal with having to explain exactly how his bits had gotten so bad. If

he was going to keep up the pace of his sex life he knew he would have to do something. Harry smiled at the thought of the look on Hermione's face if he asked her to research an ointment or something which would help him shag four or five times a day. While funny it wasn't something he'd do to his bushy-haired friend even as a joke.

Perhaps Su Li might know something. Since the Chinese seemed to have invented everything Harry figured they probably had something which would work. If that didn't work he'd ask Padma. Since her people had written the Kama Sutra one would expect they would have run into the problem. Of course he might just throw it out to all of his 'bitches' as Lilith would say and give a reward for whoever came up with the best answer. He liked Lilith but sometimes her humor embarrassed him. Of course it was his fault for making the comment about making Narcissa his bitch during the heat of sex in the first place.

Harry had taken Neville's request to heart and had made himself scarce. He had stayed in his room all day catching up with Narcissa on various things. She had returned to Hogwarts right after he had talked with Hermione and Neville and Harry thought she had taken the daily news well. She had approved of his dealings with the Patils and had promised to get Padma her due in regards to a bride-price. Narcissa had also been able to contact the CEO of the Nimbus Company at home and secured a tentative deal for supplying brooms to the school. All in all the night turned out to be refreshingly boring after all the drama during the day.

Harry had been disappointed that Padma had decided to return to the Ravenclaw dorms. He had hoped she would have stayed the night so they could talk. However she had looked even more blown away by the time he had gotten back to his room. Su Li had been pretty gobsmacked as well by everything she had been told. She had not been happy to find out she had a spy spell in her head. There had one bit of good news in that Padma had a ghost of an idea on how to deal with the spy spell. She didn't know what it was but she had a vague recollection of something which might help. Padma had said she'd sleep on it and maybe she'd remember in the morning.

So the evening had been quiet. Luna and Lilith both thought it best they be seen sleeping in their own beds that night so Harry had

ended up with Narcissa. It had been rather pleasant to find Narcissa was perfectly content to just snuggle and drop off to sleep. She had told him the next morning Lucius often 'worked late' and so usually slept in his own room. So it had been a very long time since she had slept and felt like what a married woman should.

Of course Narcissa wanted to test out how good morning sex could be. Apparently Lucius refused to have sex in the morning so she'd only heard about how good 'snuggle sex' could be. It had been nice and Narcissa was open for much more but Harry found purging Su Li's aura had taken a serious toll on his bits to the point where he'd actually started bleeding in places.

He had spent the rest of the day going over his school books and reviewing where he should be when he went back to class. It was going to be interesting considering he already was a Hogwarts graduate in a sense. Harry was finding the more he thought on a subject the more he could remember from Riddle's memories. Reading certain textbooks which were mostly unchanged since Riddle's time was making him experience déjà vu over and over again. He had a feeling he was going to be very bored in class. Oh well, class would give him an opportunity to practice wandless and silent casting.

Harry finally saw the person he had been waiting for as she came into the Great Hall and made her way to the Slytherin table. He turned to Neville who was talking to Rhodri Dearborn, his seventh year prefect counterpart, "Excuse me Neville but I have to go talk to someone. It will be at the Slytherin table so keep your eyes out for me will you? I don't think the Snakes will try anything but I don't want anyone coming over thinking they have to save me, okay?"

Neville and Rhodri shared a confused look, "Sure thing Harry if that is what you want. What's up?" Neville asked.

Harry got up and patted Neville reassuringly on the shoulder, "Oh it's nothing dramatic; I just found out House Zabini and Greengrass used to do business with House Potter and I wanted to ask Daphne and Blaise about it. I figure I can use this as a wedge to bring up other issues with certain Slytherins later" Harry said with a knowing look to Neville who nodded in understanding.

"Good luck getting anything out of Greengrass, Harry!" Rhodri snorted. "I caught her and Davis out past curfew once and boy that was an eye-opener. I swear she wouldn't open her mouth to answer my questions about what they were doing without her looking at Davies for permission. You'd be better off talking to her sister."

Harry nodded, "Yeah I've actually been thinking about looking into that. She certainly wasn't like that our first two years, was she Neville?"

Neville looked over at the Slytherin table and then shrugged, "Yeah I don't know what is up with her either. House Longbottom has had plenty of dealings with them and I've often seen her at social gatherings off and on since I was about six. I don't know what happened to her since she was always outspoken and actually quite the tomboy when we were younger. You wouldn't think of it by looking at her but she's really good on a broom and likes climbing trees."

"Well just watch my back. I wouldn't put it past a few like Seamus or Cormac to use me sitting over there as an excuse to try and 'save me' so they can do some Slytherin bashing." Harry said before walking over to the Snakes. Eyes followed him as he did so. From what Neville had said earlier, the school was buzzing with Smith's murder and Harry's fight with Ron, especially since he'd been shipped off to St. Mungo's after breakfast. Already rumors abounded about how Harry had grievously injured Ron to the point he needed hospitalization. Thankfully his bonding to Padma seemed to still be a secret.

As it turned out things couldn't have been better at the Slytherin table if Harry had planned it. The people he wanted to talk to were all clumped together towards the end of the table. There was even an empty seat between Matt Harper and Blaise who was sitting next to Daphne. Her sister Astoria was sitting across from her and talking animatedly about something. Crabbe and Goyle were eating quietly by themselves while Bulstrode was talking to Tracey Davis. Even better Malfoy was nowhere to be seen. Apparently his stock had fallen in such a way that he didn't like being seen at meal times with the bulk of Slytherins since it was becoming obvious to the whole school how far he had fallen.

Harry walked up to Blaise, "Excuse me Ms. Zabini but is this seat taken? No? Great!" He sat down before anyone could protest. Harper just gave him a quick look and then went back to talking to his fellow chaser Nickolas Vaisey. He obviously didn't want to get involved. The rest of the Snakes stared at him for a moment.

Finally Blaise spoke up, "So...what brings the high and mighty Lord Black to our humble table?" While she was obviously being sarcastic, Harry could tell it she wasn't trying to be a prat about it.

"You do Blaise...well you and Daphne and Astoria." Harry said. Both Blaise and Astoria looked surprised while Daphne suddenly looked very apprehensive.

Harry laughed, "It isn't anything to look worried about Daphne! When I became Lord Black I learned a lot about my past, my new family and other relatives I have. I never knew one of my Grandmums was a Greengrass or my Great-Grandmum was a Black. I also found out House Potter did business with your Houses and I was kind of hoping we could talk about it sometime."

"Really?" Blaise asked as if she couldn't really believe it.

Harry nodded, "Really!" Harry had not been partnered up in class with Blaise in a long time and so this was the first time he'd really gotten a good look at her from close up in almost two years. She was very pretty with a typical Mediterranean look with darker skin and curly black hair. Her skin was almost the perfect mid-point between Daphne's pale skin and Tracey's chocolate tone.

Blaise shook her head, "You mean it? The part about you just finding all of this out recently?" Seeing Harry nod, she looked blown away by the news. "Crap Potter...uhm I mean Lord Black what the hell have they been doing over there in Gryffindor? I know you live with Muggles but no one ever talked to you about this stuff?"

Astoria spoke up, "Yeah I know he's quiet but Neville's is a Lord like you...or will be next year I guess. Figured he'd say something. He's nice."

Harry shrugged, "From what I can tell everyone has read all those rubbish Boy-Who-Lived story books which got printed and never thought to actually ask me what I know or didn't know. To be blunt

I've learned more since I became Lord Black about my life than I have known my entire life." Harry bit his lip and was quiet for a second. "I mean I didn't find out my name is actually Harold and Harry was just the family nickname till a few weeks ago. So no, I really don't know anything and I want to catch up."

Harry looked at Daphne and then back to Blaise, "Look I may be a Lord already but it will be with you gals I'm going to be dealing with in the coming years. If our Houses did business in the past there must have been a reason and I'd like to see about continuing that or at least make the offer. I know right now being associated with me or my House may seem dangerous but I refuse to live my life thinking only about the problems of the now. I have my Houses to look after. So I wanted to expand my circle of acquaintances. I can't afford to ignore House politics anymore. I'm already behind as it is and I need to catch up quickly."

Blaise and Astoria looked thoughtful while Daphne had an odd look on her face. Harry wasn't sure what it was but it was better than the sullen look she normally seemed to have. Of course this look disappeared the instant she felt Tracey's hand on her shoulder as the witch leaned around her, "So what bout da quashi, mon? Ya gwan be all ginnygog or be wit da peoples?"

Harry struggled not to frown. It was bad enough she was hard to understand. Luckily his passive legimency told him exactly what she had meant. Again Tracey grated on him and seeing how Daphne's face fell didn't make it any easier. Yet he was mindful of how Narcissa had reminded him how most of the people he'd end up doing business with would be people he didn't like personally. While Tracey might seem a right bitch she was also a potential ally.

"Of course Tracey; just because I ended up a Lord doesn't change the fact I grew up living no better than a house elf. I'm not about to shun anyone because of their blood status, house affiliation or how many galleons they have or don't have in Gringotts. I grew up poor and I've been cooking and cleaning for my relatives since I was old enough to do so. You got the wrong guy if you believe people like Snape who spreads the lie how I was raised in comfort and leisure. I mean maybe my Dad did but I sure as hell didn't." Harry reached out and took Blaise's hand, "Feel that? Does that feel like the hand of a pampered prince as Snape would say?"

Blaise was a bit shocked how Harry had so casually reached out and taken her hand. She was even more shocked to find all of the calluses on his hand. Her shock was compounded when she let her fingers roam around the many calluses and couldn't help but wonder how those rough hands might feel on her naked body. For some reason Blaise was suddenly very aware of Harry's sensuality from almost the moment he had sat down. Sitting there rubbing his hand between her own made this feeling even more pronounced.

"No...no it doesn't." Blaise stuttered as she tried not to blush.

"Did you really have to do all those things Harry?" Astoria asked. She looked really cute with her eyes wide and a look of concern on her face.

"Sad but true, Astoria. While your average house elf would have been in heaven doing all the things I grew up doing, it wasn't so much fun for me. Living off the scraps my relatives left me, wearing my fat cousin's hand-me-downs and being called a freak my whole life. Trust me, almost everything people think they know about me is wrong." Harry told the pretty blonde.

Harry turned back to Blaise and said slyly, "You can let go of my hand now, Blaise."

"What? Your...oh!" Blaise lost her struggle against blushing as she looked down and realized she had been rubbing Harry's hand the entire time he had been talking. She dropped his hand as if it was hot. Astoria, Tracey and Millicent started to laugh and it even looked like Daphne might crack a smile.

Harry just gave her a friendly smile. "If I wasn't a private person by nature I probably would break down and do another interview for the Quibbler and set the record straight. I doubt people would believe it all...especially if it wasn't in that rag of a Daily Prophet. I mean do you think people would believe the truth that the Sorting Hat wanted to put me in Slytherin?"

Harry chuckled at the 'What!' said in almost perfect unison by all the Snakes in earshot of the comment. "Yup, the only reason I ended up in Gryffindor is because I had met Draco in Diagon Alley earlier and found him to be a bigoted berk. So I begged the Hat not to put me in the same House with him. Oh I had heard a few things about

Slytherin from Ron Weasley on the train ride up here but I still didn't know enough about the Houses to really care one way or another. Draco being a Snake was more than enough to keep me from wanting to be one as well."

Harper turned to Harry, "So if it wasn't for Draco we could have had the best Seeker in Hogwarts on our team instead of being saddled with him?"

"Afraid so," Harry admitted.

Harper turned back to Vaisey, "I don't know about you Nick but I'm not going to let Mr. 'Wait Till My Father Hears Of This!' live this down."

Vaisey nodded, "Hey...Harr..uhm Harold...is it true you are looking at getting all the teams Nimbus 2001's?"

Harry shrugged, "That is the plan. I've got the galleons now and I think it is something that needs doing. Draco's mum just got with me last night and it looks like I'll be able to pull it off within a week. I hope you don't think I'm doing it to piss you guys off or score some cheap points against the Malfoys. "

Both the Slytherin chasers shook their heads. "Nope. I for one am happy because I want to win a game and not have to listen to the other team piss and moan about how we only won because of our brooms," Harper said.

"Yeah just because there are some in Slytherin who think ambition means winning anyway you can doesn't mean there aren't a lot of us who want to win by our own talents. We want a win for our house to mean something!" Vaisey added.

"Up Slytherin!" came a cry from a group of fourth years farther down the table. They had obviously been listening in.

Harry smiled at this bit of House solidarity. "I am glad to hear it because when I start playing again I will be riding a Nimbus 2001 just like everyone else. I want to win because of my own skills and not because I have a Firebolt."

Astoria laughed in the musical way of hers. "You would probably win on a Shooting Star with the way you fly."

Harry held up his hands, "As much as I would like to chew the fat in regards to Quidditch, it isn't what I came over for." He turned back to Blaise who seemed to have a odd dreamy look on her face which he had noticed a lot of witches had when he had talked to them over the last few days. "So Blaise, how about it? Think you can spare some time to fill me in on things?"

Blaise face took on an evil look, "Are you asking me out on a date, Lord Black?"

Harry blinked at this causing Tracey and Astoria to laugh nastily at him. "Well Blaise I think my track record with dates shows how inept I am with witches. However if you think talking about family business is a good idea for a date, who am I to argue with you?"

Blaise had the decency to blush as the laughs were now directed at her. "Touché, my lord!"

Harry looked at Daphne and tried to ignore the look Tracey was giving him. "The same goes for you Daphne. I never knew how closely related our Houses were. I'm sure between you and your dad you have a lot of interesting stories to tell." A thought struck him so he turned back to Zabini. "Oh there is one thing, Blaise. I'm going to meet Lord Greengrass to discuss business in about a month. Maybe I should meet with your dad at the same time?"

"Only if you want to spend the time watching them snipe at each other, Harry," Blaise chuckled.

Harry looked at Astoria who had snorted in amusement at Blaise's comment, "Is it that bad?"

Astoria shrugged, "Oh I think a lot of it may just be two guys trying to prove whose bits are bigger. Our dads have been rivals since Hogwarts...come to think of it I think our grandfathers were as well."

Blaise nodded, "Our families get along but Astoria is spot on. The witches in the family seem to mix pretty well but put some Zabini and Greengrass wizards in a room together and it might as well be like watching Snakes and Lion fans here during a game."

"So you guys are friendly enemies or hostile friends depending how the wind blows?" Harry asked as he was reminded of something Narcissa had said.

Both Astoria and Blaise laughed at this and Daphne actually smiled. "I think that sums up our two houses pretty well, Harry. For someone who is as ignorant as you say, you obviously are a quick learner." Daphne said warmly.

Harry tried not to show how surprised he was at this. Daphne had said this in something approaching her normal voice! Ever since around Fourth Year if she had spoken to Harry at all it had always been only a hair above a whisper. He found she had a very pleasant voice.

Harry also noticed how the others were surprised Daphne had spoken and had done so with such warmth in her voice. "I'd like to take credit for it but it was actually something Narcissa said about House Potter and Black's relationship throughout the years."

Daphne nodded, "The same could probably be said about our house and House Black. Like House Potter we have always done business in the Muggle world so we ended up doing so for the Blacks. They would rather pay extra to have us interact with Muggles for them than risk being found out by the Muggles. My mum says her aunt, your Grandmum Harry, would tell stories how your Great-Grandmum Dorea Black was a bit paranoid. Sort of like Professor Moody with all of that 'constant vigilance' and stuff."

Harry smiled at this. "From some of the things I've picked up from Narcissa that sounds about right. If you two like I could meet your dad in Hogsmeade during one of the weekends so you gals could see him after my meeting."

Astoria brightened at this and Daphne was obviously about to say something when Tracey tapped her on the shoulder, "Time we be gwaan Daph...we no be wantin' be late for da Study group."

Again Harry didn't like watching how Daphne's face which had been more animated and down-right beautiful fell into a blank mask. Worse was listening to the rather dead almost whisper, "Yes Tracey."

Tracey gave Harry a look which almost made him want to pull out his wand due to the challenge implied, "Sorry, mon, but we hab some of dem pickneys of yours we be tutoring.

Harry gave a curt nod as he watched the pair pick up their things and leave the hall. After the door close behind them he looked back at Astoria who looked embarrassed. Harry turned to Blaise only to find her shaking her head.

"Don't ask, Harry. Just let it be," the witch said sadly.

Harry looked back to Astoria, "No offense girls but I'm already a bit peeved how some witch friends of mine seemed willing to let things slide when their girlfriends were getting shit on. So excuse me if I don't like seeing it happen here."

If anything Harry's words made Astoria look like she was going to cry. Blaise reached out and took Harry's hand, "I know it looks bad, Harry, but please don't go charging off to her rescue like some Gryffindor. There are...a lot of issues involved here."

Harry was silent for a moment, "Okay I won't go charging off like you said. But I will be damned if you think I'm going to drop this. You got that? Maybe there is a good reason for all this but if believe for one moment I'm not going to look into it then you are wrong. For just a moment Daphne was alive and Tracey moved in and stepped on her. It's wrong and I can feel it's wrong. I've had my fill of people suffering for the 'Greater Good' so pardon me if I'm concerned."

Blaise was obviously taken back by his words but Astoria's look reminded him of how Sally had looked when he had told her he was going to take her away. This just hardened his resolve to find out what was going on between those two witches. If he had a 'saving people' thing then he was going to use it!

Harry was going to go on when he noticed Bulstrode, Crabbe and Goyle getting ready to leave. He turned back to Blaise, "Hey I have another thing I need to do. I would like to talk to you sometimes Blaise. Just let me know, okay?" He took her hand and kissed it, "I promise I will be the soul of a gentleman!" Harry joked.

"Yeah...sure...Harry. That would be delic...er...wonderful!" Blaise stammered as she once again turned beet red.

Harry missed how he had flustered Blaise as he hastened to catch up with the Slytherin trio.

Bulstrode heard him coming and raised an eyebrow at him, "Something you want Lord Black?"

Harry fell into step with them, "Yes I just need to talk to Gregory privately if he'll let me."

This caused the Snakes to stop and look at him. Crabbe gave a surprised grunt and gave Harry a surly sneer. Obviously all the time he'd been around Draco had at least taught him that. Goyle, on the other hand, just looked at him woodenly.

Bulstrode gestured at Crabbe, "Right! Off you go then Vince. Let the pair have their chat."

Crabbe looked at her and then back at Harry before he shrugged with another breathy grunt and left without a word.

Harry waited for a bit but Bulstrode didn't seem like she was going to leave. "Uhm Bulstrode, I wish to speak to Gregory alone."

"Well I wish I got more of my dad's pearly complexion instead of my mom's looks so we're all not getting what we want, yah? I'm a prefect and I'm not about to leave Greggry here alone with you. There is enough craziness going around especially with Smith dying like he did. I'm just here so my House will know nothing weird went on. Got it?"

Harry smiled, "Okay Millie I can live with that." Harry gestured towards an empty classroom. After entering, Harry shut the door and cast a silencing spell on it. He took a deep breath and turned to Goyle. "Gregory Goyle, as Lord Black I killed your father. At the time I didn't know it was your dad. All I knew at the time was I was being attacked by Death Eaters. While I've never liked you or your 'boss' Draco, I never really cared one way or another. In fact, I'm sorry I accidentally threw you so hard on the train. I wasn't in my right mind and I hadn't planned on giving you a concussion."

Goyle continued to just look at him while Millicent had an impassive look on her face. "I'm just learning the rules of the magical world so bear with me. From what I've learned you have the 'right' to seek revenge upon me since I killed your dad. Now he was trying to kill me so I have an excuse. However from what I can tell this doesn't matter; a lot of people might expect you to avenge your father and even pressure you to do so. I just want to be up front with you. If you feel the need to do so then I'd ask you to be a man about it. Don't hide behind Draco or any of the other Death Nibblers. Don't skulk around and expect to bushwhack me. Face me and duel me properly."

Both Goyle and Bulstrode looked surprised by this. Obviously this was the last thing they had expected to hear.

Harry took a chance and put his hand on Goyle's shoulder and looked deep into his eyes. "If you do this I will understand but I wanted ask you to look past this all. You are at an important crossroads, Gregory. If you give in to your family or pressure from the likes of Nott or Malfoy then you are going to die. You come after me, whether by stealth or in a formal challenge you won't walk away. I'm not saying this as a threat; I'm just telling you the truth. Another truth is I don't want to kill you. You deserve more than just being one of Draco's thugs. I challenge you to aspire to be something more because the other options is to continue the way you have been and I can assure you will probably end up just like your dad."

Harry released Goyle who seemed stunned and looked at Millicent, "I don't want to fight you Slytherins. You come after me then I'll respond in kind. Try to kill me and you'll end up just as dead as the other Death Eaters I killed in London. Otherwise I'm willing to live and let live. I have enough enemies to go making more because to many people just think being in Slytherin somehow means you are evil. I'm through letting other people make decisions for me. I don't care what house you are in. Until you prove me otherwise, you're okay in my book."

Harry turned back to Goyle, "So I wanted to talk to you today and lay it on the line. You need to make a choice and you need to make it soon. I know with your dad's death House Goyle is run by your uncle. From what Narcissa has told me he's a Death Eater too. So it is very possible you are going to be the head of House Goyle soon because I'm not going give any Death Eaters a chance to bribe their way out

of Azkaban. You need to start thinking about what is best for House Goyle in the long run."

Harry tapped his finger against his scar, "I've been in your Dark Lord's head and let me tell you something; he doesn't care about you, your House or your politics. He wants power and your obedience. He's mutilated his soul for immortality. He doesn't love, he doesn't shag and he doesn't laugh unless it is with cruelty. Play a game of darts with your mates with a pint down at the pub? Love your girl and play with your children? Make love with that special someone? Voldemort knows nothing of these things and doesn't want to know. All you Slytherin types need to think about who it is you are following. He is nothing like you have been led to believe."

Goyle sighed, "If things go bad will you give me sanctuary?" His voice was surprisingly mellow for a guy of his bulk.

Harry nodded, "I have plenty of properties now to hide anyone who feels they need to hide from their families or anyone who wants to pressure them."

"I don't want to die like my father," Goyle said softly. "I'm tired of having to follow Malfoy around. I hear all the time how the Dark Lord will triumph over you or how Mr. Malfoy will do this or that to you. Draco has made so many boasts of how he's going to humble you. I've heard it for years and yet you're still here."

Goyle's shoulder's slumped a bit, "Can I tell you a secret if you won't ask me how I know?" Seeing Harry nod, Goyle pressed on. "My father has been a loyal Death Eater since the beginning. So has Vince's dad as well. Yet both of them got sent after you in London. The Dark Lord sent people he felt he could afford to lose. So the group was made up of mostly new Death Eaters like Flint and led by Pettigrew. For all their years of loyalty, our dads were sent out with the newbies because they were seen as expendable." Goyle looked down at his feet for a moment and both Harry and Millicent looked embarrassed when they heard Goyle sniff and try to hold back tears.

Yet when Goyle looked up his eyes burned with determination, "I don't want to be expendable. I don't want to be remembered as just one of the guys behind Malfoy. I want to do something with my life and I want to do it for me and not because I've been ordered to."

Goyle surprised Harry by suddenly sticking out his hand. Harry shook it.

"I don't know what I'm going to do but I'm not going to fuck with you...ever." Goyle said fiercely. "You have my word on that."

Harry nodded, "It's all I ask, Gregory. If you need sanctuary, I'll give it. If you want we can ignore each and I'm okay with that. This meeting never happened if that's what will be best for you." Harry looked at Millicent and she nodded in agreement.

"There have been too many Houses lost to the last war. A few more fights and it will be just us at Hogwarts left to try to rebuild what we can. If we don't all make a stand and try and stop it then there won't be much left of Magical Britain. I'm glad to see you don't want that." Harry said sincerely.

Goyle gave a curt nod and then abruptly turned and quickly left the room.

"Wow, Lord Black...that certainly wasn't what I was expecting!" Bulstrode said.

Harry shrugged, "Everything I said to Goyle applies to you Millicent. I know your family has been off and on again supporters of Voldemort. If you need help or your family wants help breaking away then you have but to ask."

Millicent's eyes narrowed as she looked at him with a penetrating look, "Do you really mean that?"

"I wouldn't have offered if I didn't. Look, I recently learned how your House came over with the Malfoys and were part of the group who betrayed the rightful King of England which created a feud between the Potters and the Malfoys. In the past a curse associated with that feud has worked upon those allies. Yet I don't feel the curse around you so I'm quite willing to try to mend fences with you and your House. I meant what I said, Millie. I'm tired of hating Slytherins because I'm supposed to for the only reason is that I'm a Gryffindor. I'm more than my Hogwarts house and I'm betting the lot of you are as well."

Millicent was silent for a moment before giving a mirthless chuckle. "Yeah about all of that...well the truth is tragic in its own way." Seeing Harry's bemused look the witch went on, "Christian Bulstrode, my ancestor who first came over with all the rest did so because he was gay. He was trying to make a new life for him and his partner away from France so he could hide his sexuality. He and his partner had paired up with two lesbians and they had all hoped coming to England would make it easier to hide the whole charade."

The big girl sighed sadly, "I know it seems like such a cliché...the gay artist but my family has always been about art, fashion and taking risks to indulge in the passion of life even before him."

"I don't see anything wrong with that, Millie. Your House has contributed to our culture a lot more than any of the other so-called Dark houses which just seem to hang out and hate everything they don't like. Hell I'm wearing one of your mother's designs right now," Harry said as warmly as he could. He had hoped to build a bridge with Goyle. Being able to do the same with Bulstrode was an added bonus!

"Yeah...Harry can I ask you a question; one you'll answer honestly?" Millicent looked almost girlish as she asked.

"Sure thing Millie; ask away! I think you and I both know that I can't tell lies." Harry said. Millie looked down at Harry's hand and blushed a bit. Harry realized this probably hadn't been the best thing to say since she had been part of the Inquisitional Squad.

"Am I ugly?" Millicent asked while looking at her shoes.

Harry didn't answer at first. He just looked at her; looked at her like he'd never really done before. He reached out and lifted her face so he could stare at it and into her eyes. After years of towering over the rest of them, Millie was now only about two inches taller than him.

"Millie you aren't beautiful and you aren't pretty. Plain yes, but ugly? No you are not ugly. Plus you shouldn't be so hard on yourself! You are only sixteen! Look how you lost all that baby fat you seemed to keep longer than the other girls. I mean while I'm sure most blokes just look at your chest, you have a nicely solid build. I know 'big-boned' sounds like an insult but you are just a big girl. Not everyone

can be dainty little waif like Su Li over in Ravenclaw. Plus look at the beaters on the Holyhead Harpies. They're not small or gorgeous but they have their own fan-boys."

Harry thought a bit, "You know I've seen pictures of my parents from when they were school kids and then later when they were older. Neville's mom Alice looked rather goofy if you ask me but by the time she had Neville she looked really pretty. My mom was pretty as a student but I think she was beautiful at the age she was when she died. I think you need to give yourself some more time. Maybe you should brew up some aging potion and get a look at how you'll look in a decade or so."

Millicent shook her head, "I'm afraid too."

Harry rolled his eyes, "Come on Millie you aren't going to turn into a troll in a decade."

Millicent gasped at this and started to cry. Harry blinked at this. What had he said? Harry reached out and took her by the shoulders, "Hey Millie, don't cry. I didn't mean to upset you."

Millicent continue to cry but choked out, "Harry...can I, can I tell you a secret? I mean a big one?"

Harry was tempted to hug the girl to see if that would get her to calm down but he just said, "Sure Millie, you can tell me anything. I'll keep your secrets. I promise on my honor."

"Remember how I said my family has done odd things in the name of art and passion? Well they have never been one to shy away from odd things. Doing things which others dared not wasn't just limited to my paternal line either. A long time ago my maternal great-grandfather felt his family was losing its essence since it seemed every generation seemed weaker magically than the one before it. So he joined a secret group which felt new magic needed to be brought into our family and he was willing to go against everything our society believes in to do it."

Harry gasped, "He joined that group who believed in mating with non-humans! The ones that produced Hagrid and Professor Flitwick!"

Millicent looked up in shocked surprise, "You know of it?"

Harry shook his head, "Not much. Lilith Moon told me because she's been researching the whole reason how we humans have magic and this groups relates to that. I don't even know what the group was called."

"It was called the Aurore Renaissance and it was started in southern France. Different families were picked to mate with different non-humans for various reasons. I don't know how they were picked. I know the Muggles have a science about it now but back then it was all based on nature philosophy. Through that and magical means families were paired up with the non-human race we'd have the best chance to breed with."

"Oh..." It was all Harry could say when it hit him where Millicent was going.

She proved him right by nodding. "Yes, my great-grandfather mated with a troll. He sired three children that way. Who these children were raised by depended on whether they took up after their mother or father. One of those children was a boy who looked human enough to be raised as one. When he got old enough he married a witch but also sired two children with half-trolls from another family in the Aurore Renaissance. One child was practically a full troll and went to live with his mother. The other was my mother.

"She's not a looker and most people think my father only married her because of her fashion talents. I know my dad loves her and doesn't care about her parentage. He told me how me and my brother are more powerful magically than he is so he's happy. However I'm terrified I'm going to change as I get older. I got my granddad telling stories when he'd had a few too many drinks once. He told me how some of the human looking crosses turned out to change more as they got older."

Harry finally did hug the distraught girl. "Millie come on, you have gotten better looking every year. Yeah it was easy to call you a troll when we were kids. I mean you were about a foot taller than the girls when they were all taller than us blokes. Look at you now, though; you are shedding weight and I think your hair seems less coarse than it was. Actually this explains something I've always wondered about you. Your family is French but you have the olive

skin and hair which looks more Greek. I think maybe you just to stop worrying about how you will end up and focus more on working with what you have now. I mean I'm not one to talk but I think if you do something with your hair it will really help your looks overall."

Millicent broke into a weak smile, "Thanks Harry...I know I'm being stupid. I just worry when I'm surrounded by so many pretty witches that no one I want will ever look at me."

"I tell you what Millie, I'll look at you if no one else will. I recently had a big magical change and now I'm finally feeling like a real teenager. I'd be willing to check out what is under your robe. Course I'm finding I'm a die-hard tit man so maybe I'm not the best bloke to ask." Harry said jokingly.

Millicent surprised him by laughing, "Hey at least you are up-front and honest about it. Better than guys who chat me up just because they've heard the rumor that I don't have a gag reflex."

"Hmm...I've heard that one." Harry waggled his eyebrows at her, "Any truth to them, Miss Bulstrode?"

"I'm sure you'd like to know." Millicent said with a smile.

Harry grinned back before going on in a more serious tone. "Millie, while we are on the subject of secrets and telling truths, I've got a question for you. Why did you turn your back on Draco, Pansy and the rest after last year? All I've heard is the whole incident in Umbridge's office shook you up. While I'd be the last to look down at someone for being rattled by the threat of the Cruciatus curse since I've had it cast on me...well it doesn't seem like something that would bother you. I mean you have been hanging around all the Death Nibblers. I would think you've probably heard all sorts of stories about some pretty nasty things."

Millicent was silent for a moment before nodding. "Your right Harry. Oh I admit it threw me how if the Ministry is against Voldemort that they'd have set that hag on you. But it wasn't how she treated you which really got me but something else which did involved you in a way."

"What happened?" Harry asked.

"Remember when you had your Firebolt taken away?" Millie asked. "Well the rumors of Umbridge having it guarded by a troll were true. So during one of the meetings with her, I went down to talk to him while Draco and Pansy sucked up to Umbridge. I am pretty fluent in Jotun or Ghob'lay Jhunk as the goblins would say. However when I tried to talk to the troll about all I could get out of him was a bunch of grunts. I think he spent most of his time more interested in scratching his butt then listening to me."

"Will trolls aren't noted for their smarts," Harry said cautiously.

Millie's eyes flashed in anger. She took a deep breath to calm herself down. "Your right Harry, they aren't noted for being smart. But what do you actually know about trolls?"

Harry thought about it. Surprisingly Voldemort's memories weren't any help. He saw them as simply dumb muscle for hire. "Actually now that I think about it I don't know much. I mean Professor Lupin was going to do a whole bit on trolls but since he got behind being sick longer after that one full moon in March I think he had to dropped it if I remember right."

"Exactly! You don't know anything and neither does practically anyone else here at Hogwarts! They don't know much about giants either. Everyone thinks Professor Hagrid is barmy for saying giants are misunderstood. The truth is giants are aggressive because wizards have penned them up and treated them terribly for centuries."

Millicent wiped her eyes before continuing on in a calmer voice. "The truth is giants and trolls come from similar stock and both are equally misunderstood. There are three types of trolls most people know of. There are the swamp or water trolls who spend so much of their time in water. There are the mountain trolls which are closest to giants in lineage. Then there are the forest trolls. They call themselves the Burs and they are the smartest and cleverest of them all. Because of this they have often been hunted by wizards and had lies written about them to help make people fear them."

"I am descended from one of the Burs and I know a lot of their culture. However the Burs were mostly hunted to extinction in England. The usual excuse was they tended to side with the goblin

when they'd revolt but the real reason I think is because they were smart and hard to break to mankind's will." Millicent said.

"What about the other trolls? I seem to recall most swamp or water trolls were also killed off." Harry asked.

"That was mostly because they attracted too much attention from the Muggles. I mean look how Grendel, the most famous of water trolls, is still known to Muggles. Obviously the Muggle tale doesn't show how Beowulf was a wizard and he showed up to help keep the Wizarding world a secret. Likewise most mountain trolls were captured or killed. The captured ones have been bred for centuries like dogs so they can be useful to man." Millie said sadly.

A light went on in Harry's brain. "I think I see. To most wizards trolls are just another 'thing' like house-elves. Purebloods don't see them as people. They don't see them as thinking beings like themselves."

Millicent nodded and smiled at how Harry was talking all of this. "While strengthening magic was one of the reasons for the Aurore Renaissance another was to fight back against using the non-human races as little more than dogs to be bred for servitude. That's what I saw in that troll. A being who used to belong to a culture with a rich language and heritage. Now it had been bred to be nothing more than a guard dog."

"And if Purebloods look down on people who have Muggle blood in them then something like you are an abomination." Harry said knowingly.

Millicent nodded, "I have met a lot of Pwrs over the years while on holiday. I've danced with them, sang their songs and played with their kids when I was little. They are people. They look different and see things differently than we do but they are still people. After seeing what wizards have reduced the mountain trolls to I couldn't help but think what would happen to the Pwrs on the Continent if the Dark Lord took over and then spread his reign there."

"So when you had a chance to break away from Draco and Pansy you took it." Harry said.

Millicent nodded and was silent for a moment. Harry watched as the girl began to look very thoughtful.

"Problem, Millie?" Harry asked after a bit.

"No. For some reason something you said to Greg just hit me. You said if his he or his House needed help you'd help. Does that apply to House Bulstrode?" Millicent asked.

"I said I would and I mean it. Of course it depends on what help you need," Harry replied.

"Well I don't know how much you know about me but one of the reasons I'm sort of Pansy's answer to Vince and Greggy is because House Bulstrode owes a lot of money to House Malfoy. My parents are more into art than finance and I don't think they really looked at the terms of the loan they signed with Lucius Malfoy back when our house needed some money to expand our business. So now we are all sort of under their thumb. Since Pansy seems to believe she is betrothed to Draco, she thinks this means she somehow owns me. I played along because it was better than pushing the issue. Right now House Bulstrode does the bare minimum we have to keep houses like Malfoy, Nott and Parkinson off our backs."

"What do you want me to do about it?" Harry asked.

"I'm thinking you could buy out the debt from House Malfoy. While my parents didn't read the fine print they did make sure there were clauses in the terms which allowed another House to take over the debt. No one has wanted to do this for us because no one wanted to go against House Malfoy. I know you're rich now and can probably easily afford it. You'd be helping House Bulstrode go neutral which we really we've always have been. That and you'd be hurting House Malfoy at a time when they already have taken a few kicks to the kiwis." Millicent said with a feral grin.

"Gosh Millie, you making this a tough sell," Harry laughed.

"I thought you'd like it. So is it something you'd consider?" Millicent asked.

Harry nodded, "I'll have Narcissa look into it. If anyone knows if it is a workable plan it will be her. I don't know how well you know Draco's mum but she'll bend over backwards to piss on her ex-husband."

It was Harry's turn to grow silently thoughtful for a moment. "However I have two conditions I'd like be met before I agree. First, I would like it if your mother would accept Sally Black as an intern or apprentice or something after she finishes school. All she wants out of life is to design clothes. I think she has the talent and won't embarrass your mother if she would do this for me. Secondly, I want your family to cooperate with my new Isis Foundation by disclosing everything they know about the Aurore Renaissance. The very reason I founded this company was to look into source of our magic and whether or not we need to do what your ancestors did to keep our magic strong."

"You're not going to expose us are you Harry?" Millicent asked fearfully.

"Not at all. We have knocked around a few ideas, Lilith, Luna and I and we aren't fully there when it comes to our plans. Right now I'm fully behind the aims of the Aurore Renaissance and listening to your story tonight just gives me even more reasons. I've never liked how Magicals use other races and yet treat them like crap. However we may ask for some of your eggs, Millie."

"My eggs?" Millie said with confusion.

Harry couldn't help but smile his famous lop-sided smile. "Yes, the Muggles have ways of taken a man's sperm and fertilizing a woman's egg and then implanting them in a different woman so she can bear the child. I've been thinking with my new money I could pay to have surrogate mothers bear children which will hopefully be magical." Millicent's eye's went wide at this.

"Right now, Millie, you are a gold mine because every child of yours has genes the Isis Foundation will want. I myself may have succubae blood running strong in me. It may be why I can speak to snakes. It is very possible that when we get started the Foundation will want you and I to have a kid. Now that doesn't mean they'll want me to knock you up, but at least have my sperm and one of your eggs put together." Harry said.

"Well I wouldn't expect a guy like you to want to shag a gal like me." Millicent said sadly.

"Hey, what did I say earlier? Yes you're not Blaise or Daphne but so what? The more I've learned about you Millie, the more I like. Neville likes you and he's a good judge of character. I know you and Hermione don't get along but I know quite a few friends who have wanted to put Hermione in a headlock once or twice. It's not like shagging you would be a chore. Don't be so down on yourself. "

Millicent looked at Harry as if she was trying to figure out if he was trying to take the mickey out of her. Seeing he was serious her face broke into a big grin. "How about I go down on you instead?" With that she knelt and began to undo Harry's trousers. In a flash Harry's cock went from waiting to willing.

"My, my! What a lovely wand you've been hiding!" Millicent said happily as she jerked him off a bit to fully harden him up. Seeing how red and raw his cock was caused her to frown. "Lord Black, it seems you've been abusing yourself a lot lately. We can't have that." She took out her wand and tapped the crown of his cock while saying an incantation in a language Harry didn't recognize. At once his penis shivered with a feeling of biting cold and then searing heat. Harry cried out but just as he felt his dick had been burned off he looked down to see his bits fresh and unblemished. He gingerly fingered himself and found there wasn't any pain.

"Merlin! Okay I'll help you and your house but you have to teach some witches I know that spell!" Harry cried out happily.

"I think that can be arranged. However I doubt they'll be able to learn this so don't ask." Before Harry could ask what she meant, Millicent took a deep breath and sucked the full length of Harry's cock down her throat and began to hum.

Harry practically collapsed against a table, "Oh bloody hell!" he couldn't help but moan. The rumors of Millie's lack of a gag reflex were wonderfully true. The feeling around his cock was indescribable and Harry wouldn't be surprised if he came in seconds.

"Millie, oh God...Millie! This is brilliant!" Harry moaned helplessly.

Millie leaned back letting Harry's cock fall out of her mouth with a dirty sounding pop. She looked up at him with a sly smile as she started to take her blouse off. "I seem to recall you said you where a die-hard tit man. So...what do you think?"

Harry looked down at Millie as she doffed her blouse and unhooked her bra. A song about a woman being a brick house he had heard one summer came to his mind. For a sixteen year old, Millie's tits were incredible. They looked like something one expected Muggle porn stars needed to have surgery to get. If it were possible Harry thought his cock got even harder. As it was, his cocked eagerly twitched in anticipation.

"I think he likes them!" Millicent cooed. She grasped him by the base of his penis and began to play with his balls with her other hand. She took another breath and once again took his entire length down her throat.

Harry's eyes rolled back and he once again leaned back against the table under her oral assault. Millie once again began to hum and she started to lash her tongue around his length. She then backed off and began to alternate between sucking and licking his crown while tugging hard upon him to once again plunging him deep into her throat.

Harry couldn't help but thrash a bit under her assault. Twice he couldn't help but cry out and grab the back of her head before he realized what he was doing. Every time Harry grabbed her and released her in embarrassment, Millie would 'punish' him with an evil tongue lashing. The feeling was incredible and Harry soon felt his entire world diminished to the length of his cock. A Hungarian Horntail could show up breathing fire and Harry wouldn't have paid it much thought.

Millie finally began to tug his manhood in earnest while she attacked the sensitive crown with her tongue. Harry's scrotum was on fire and he knew he'd been cumming soon...and incredibly hard. Which explained why he didn't notice the door opening and closing until he heard a voice call out, "Finally! I've been looking all over for...eep!"

Harry's eyes snapped open to see a very red-faced Hermione Granger at the door. Just as he did, his cock gave a final twitch as he began to cum. He gave a wordless shout without any conscious thought. Millie eagerly wanked him as he shot load after fiery load over her face and onto her brilliant breasts. Harry couldn't help but groan in pleasure as she pumped his seed while he watched Hermione's face go from embarrassed to filled with orgasmic joy.

Without his aura defuser on Harry knew she was getting the full effect of his aura.

The look of bliss on her face didn't last long. After the pulse of his aura had subsided and his own cock had finished covering Millie with his seed, Hermione did not look happy at all.

"Uh...I can explain?" Harry said in a small voice. He knew this wasn't going to be good.

XxXxX

A/N: People if you are going to review my story but don't allow me a way to respond to you then please don't bother reviewing.

Update the First: I have made some changes to this chapter due to a lot of comments in the reviews. Some of the scenes with Hermione had her coming across as bitchy and mean. She was not angry at Harry but more how House Gryffindor wasn't supporting him. I have corrected that.

Tracey Speak: Again to all of you real Jamaicans I am sure I am butchering your language terribly and apologize for it. If any of you want to correct me, please feel free and I'll fix it post haste.

* "So what bout da quashi, mon? Ya gwan be all ginnygog or be wit da peoples?"

"So what about the peasants, man? Are you going to be a (derogatory influential type) or be with the people?"

Succubae/Incubae: I'm going with this spelling instead of the 'proper' succubi/incubi to differentiate them from the religious version. We will learn more about these other-dimensional beings later in the story.

Emo McBroodypants: You can all blame Dan Yetman on the 3_or_4_Part_Harmony yahoo group for this!

Redwall Series: Older teen fiction by British author Brian Jacques.

Up Slytherin! I took this House cry from Dethryl's fic "They Shook Hands"

Ghob'lay Jhunk: In Robert Dahl's story BFG, the giant language was gobblefunk. I modified it merged it a bit with Jotun.

Chapter Title: An approximation to a quote by Winston Churchill at a luncheon at the White House June 26, 1954. The exact quote is unknown due to the luncheon being closed to the press. People whose first inclination to a problem between nation is to "Nuke them till they glow!" have never been to war or see the aftermath. I got to see both. I got to see the war in Afghanistan first hand as well as seeing what 30 years of war does to a place and to the people. It isn't pretty. Diplomacy gets a bad rap these days and it is so easy for people to paint anyone who tries a diplomatic solution with the "Neville Chamberlain" brush. I often point out while Sir Neville Chamberlain was wrong to try to appease Hitler, we modern Americans simply cannot conceive of some of the pressures which were on the man.

The amount of deaths in World War I was staggering (New Zealand lost 1 out of 4 adult males for example!) and we Americans hadn't seen death in anything remotely like that since the ACW. So again it is easy for us Americans to look back in history and deride Chamberlain for being a 'appeaser' but when you look at the cost of WW I to the winners and the losers it becomes a bit easier to see why he was willing to take the chance on "jaw-jaw" rather than just jump into war. Again, all the people who rant we should bomb North Korea or Iran generally have no clue what the results of said bombing look like. I do...and it is really not something you want to wish on anyone.

I bring this up because I've noticed there trends in the reviews of story with a more active Harry and I'm amazed at how vicious a lot of people want Harry to be. In Rejected Path, Harry is going to rack up a lot of notches on his wand (in more ways then one!) but he doesn't want to kill anyone who doesn't deserve it. He and Luna are avatars of Nemesis who restores the balance and metes out justice especially for those who have been denied it. He isn't randomly going to 'nuke'em till they glow' just because he can. In fact, as we shall see, Harry is going to bend over backwards to clear the field before he unleashes the hounds of hell, those who have been rotting in a corpses shell...and I have no idea why I'm channeling Thriller.
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CHAPTER SIXTEEN – A LORD'S BURDEN

D.A.D.A. CLASSROOM, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 7th – AFTERNOON

Harry rushed to get to the classroom on time. He wasn't about to give Snape a chance to dock him house points on his first day back to school. He was almost late since he had been trying to find Hermione after she got out of Ancient Runes but he somehow missed her. Harry thought besides having the defuser on him at all times he should probably carry the Marauder's Map as well.

Harry made it before the bell rang. Even better he made it while Snape's back was turned while wrote on the blackboard. Harry looked around for his friends but he quickly saw Hermione was sitting at a full table. That one of the others at the table was Sally didn't help Harry's disquiet since the other two were Lavender and Parvati. Hermione usually avoided her dorm-mates so Harry hoped she was just there to catch up with Sally. As he looked around for an open spot, Harry was surprised but pleased to see both Lavender and Parvati had chosen to continue toward their NEWT in Defense.

Harry saw a wave from across the crowded room. With so many not continuing the class after receiving their OWLs, the course was now consolidated with all Houses. Harry made his way over to the only table with an open space. Not surprisingly so since it was in a part of the class which was drafty and hard to see what Snape was writing.

Susan Bones grinned as he sat down. "It is nice to see that I'm not the only person who almost got demerits for being late. Of course Padma here wasn't far behind me."

"Peeves had somehow stuck three 1st years to one of the suits of armor. It took a while to get them unstuck," Padma explained at Harry's curious look.

"Ah the glamorous life of the Hogwarts Prefect," Harry said with a smirk. He looked over to see Snape still writing on the board while Susan was leaning over and talking to Megan at the next table He took this chance to catch Padma's eye. "So...how are you doing?" Harry said quietly.

Padma gave a weak smile. "I'm here."

Harry smiled back, "Half the battle is showing up I'm told." Harry was actually glad the room was so crowded since it limited the amount of people covertly looking at him. Charms class had been very tense. A lot of people had noticed the daggers Hermione had been giving him. He'd already overheard whispered ideas of how Hermione was secretly in love with Ron and now Hermione was livid her lover had been attacked by Harry. Typical Hogwarts rumor bollix as usual.

He tried to see what Snape was writing on the board. "So what will be doing today?" Harry asked.

Susan flipped her notebook open to check something. "We will be doing dueling in pairs with an emphasis on silent casting and use of mid-level spells. It's just Snape's way of punishing us for poor performance."

Harry was surprised by this and it must have shown on his face because Padma broke in, "Well Professor Snape was not happy with what people did last Friday with the low level spells so I think he's doing this to embarrass us into doing better."

Susan grimaced, "I hate the git but he's a much better teacher at this than at potions. I think he might be right in this case." She looked fondly at Harry, "Actually I could see you doing the same thing back in the D.A. but without the implied humiliation. Of course when we do not have to do silent casting you can really tell who was in the D.A. last year. We wiped the floor with everyone when we did our 'evaluation' duels back in September." Susan said with a satisfied smile.

Before Harry could respond, Snape's voice brought their attention back to the front of the class. "As I said on Friday the overall level of competence with silent casting was abysmal. Therefore we will begin by seeing how diligent you were in your practice over the weekend. Failure to impress me will not only affect your grade but could easily affect whether you live or die someday. Yelling out incantations is a sure way to lose a duel." Snape said.

"You got that right!" Harry said to himself.

"You have something to say, Mr. Black?" Snape said with a sneer. "Do stand up and share."

Harry blinked; how the hell did the git hear him from way up at the front of the class? However he figured this was a topic he could actually help out the class. "I'm sorry Professor, I was agreeing with your comment about silent casting and duels. When I was ambushed in London I noticed most of the Death Eaters were casting vocal spells. In fact if Marcus Flint had cast a silent cutter or something instead of yelling out the Killing Curse I wouldn't have any warning to pull Lilith out of the way." Harry said with a nod towards the Hufflepuff who was sitting with Justin, Hannah, and Anthony towards the front of the class.

The class broke out in excited whispering. The Daily Prophet hadn't named who had been killed directly but it some of the dead had been easy to figure out like the case of Goyle Sr. since it was announced his brother had ascended to the head of House Goyle. Many were very surprised to hear the one-time Slytherin Quidditch captain had tried to kill Lilith to say nothing of being a Death Eater.

Snape look did not change but Harry could tell he was moderately surprised by Harry backing him up. "While the fact Mr. Black was set upon by poorly trained wizards, in the future you cannot hope for the same lucky breaks he always seems to have." Harry's eyes narrowed at how, once again, Snape had managed to take an accomplishment of his and attribute it to luck. "I am sure the poor quality of the teachers in this class in the past has helped in this. I, however, will not tolerate such poor performance from my students. Is that clear?"

The class echoed with a chorus of, "Yes Professor."

"Since Mr. Black brought up the ambush in London, I feel it is only best he be the first to show how well Friday's lesson took hold. Mr. Malfoy, Mr. Black to the dueling pad." Snape said with a slight smirk. The class murmured a bit at this since they all knew this was Harry's first DADA class of the year. Harry couldn't help but smirk a bit as well at the look on Malfoy's face. Harry was going to enjoy wiping the superior look of the berks face.

Harry made sure he made his way up to the front in a way so he could catch Hermione's eye. The events of the previous night still weighed upon him and he hoped she might be feeling more charitable after a night's rest and hearing the stupid rumors of the

morning. The cool look on her face did little to hearten him as he climbed onto the duelers pad.

"Mr. Black, this will be no duel. There will be no bowing or pleasantries. When I say begin, you will begin. You will not use any verbal spells nor will you use any low level spells as I outlined last Friday. To do so will disqualify you and you will receive a zed for this exercise. Do you understand? Snape said with a rather condescending air.

"Perfectly Professor." Harry said as he watch Malfoy pull out his wand and drop into a stance of readiness. As much as he hated the git, Harry had to admit he looked far more formidable than he did back when they dueled in 2nd Year. Harry took up his position and stood there centering his magic, his arms loose at his sides.

"Mr. Black, ready your wand. I will no tolerate unnecessary delays." Snape snapped.

Harry shrugged, his face intent on Draco's, "I'm ready now, Professor. You can start at any time." Again the class began to murmur excitedly to themselves.

"If you think I need any sort of advantage to beat you, Scarhead, then you're wrong!" Draco sneered.

Harry continued to keep himself focused, his eyes never leaving Draco's. "Oh I figured since I didn't have my wand out when I got ambushed by the likes of your buddy Flint I'd extend you the same courtesy. Rest assured, however, that I won't a toss at car at you like I did to them."

Draco made a noise of disbelief at the same time Harry could hear Lilith gasp at his joke. However before either one of them could say more, Snape suddenly said, "Begin!"

Draco almost lazily fired a spell at Harry. Harry, in turn, almost lazily leaned out of the way allowing the spell to leave a very nasty scorch mark on the wall behind him. Draco fired another spell and then another. Each time Harry managed to evade it. Those who were present for the fight between Ron and Harry saw once again how Harry seemed to move preternaturally fast.

Draco cast a few more spells, getting angrier each time by the look on his face. Harry just had a tight smile on his face while keeping his eyes on Draco's.

Suddenly Draco yelled, "Dodge this then, Potter!" A few in the crowd had time to gasp as they recognized the wand movements for a wide-angle bludgeoning spell. However before Draco had time to complete the spell Harry dived forward into a roll which ended with a leap bringing him toe to toe with the surprised Slytherin. Harry batted Draco's wand away with his left hand while punching with an open hand into his stomach which threw Draco the wall behind him. Only the padding saved him from a serious injury.

"Explain yourself Pott...Mr. Black! Snape said furiously.

Harry turned to the DADA teacher with a look contrite look. "Well Professor since I wasn't here on Friday I wasn't sure which spells I could use. You did say, however, this wasn't a duel and it was about staying alive. I just wanted to show everyone while some believe the wand chooses the wizard, the wizard should always be more than their wand. Draco hesitated when I got past his guard. He paid the price for it."

The two stared at each other for a moment before Snape spoke in a grudging tone, "Very astute Mr. Black. Five points to Gryffindor. However I shall deduct ten points for using excessive force on Mr. Malfoy. There was no need to use your magic to enhance your punch."

Draco got to his feet breathing heavily, "Professor! You can't let Potter get away with this!"

"Mr. Malfoy, this is my classroom and I shall do what I know is best. You allowed yourself to be caught unaware and had this been a real fight it is obvious Mr. Black could have had you dead if he had so chosen. You obviously did not take this duel serious enough. Five points from Slytherin; perhaps in the future you will take the honor of our House more seriously." Snape said coldly.

Harry tried hard not to grin. It was rare Snape took points from Slytherin but if there ways two was to do it was by ignoring Snape was the teacher and by making Slytherin House look bad. Harry

thought he must have hit Draco harder than he thought since the little git didn't whip out his customary threat about telling his father.

Harry's good humor didn't last as Snape turned back to him, "So perhaps let us see how you deal with another opponent. One it shall be interesting to see how much you will rough-house. Ms. Granger, to the pad!"

Ah crap, Harry thought. It had been relatively easy to beat Draco since for all his spell casting ability he hadn't taken any of his mother's training to heart. While keeping eye-contact it had been easy for Harry to use passive legimency against him and know what spells he was going to cast and where. Hermione's mind wouldn't be that easy. Plus Harry knew full well from last year how good a dueler Hermione was. Worse she seemed still very angry about the previous night and he wouldn't put it past her to be nasty about it. Hermione did have a vindictive streak as Rita Skeeter had learned. To make matters even worse, he had to be careful how he defeated her because beating her easily would hurt her pride and using some 'Voldemort Specials' would arouse her suspicions to say nothing of Snape.

Hermione still had her earlier cool look as she climbed onto the platform and struck a good dueler stance. Harry could at least tell she was nervous; she had probably been thinking about what he had done back in London. This time Harry had covertly taken his wand out of its holster to avoid people knowing he had one. Harry locked eyes with Hermione and found his earlier worry about her shields was right. He'd be only able to get a hint of what she was doing.

Any further strategizing ended with Snape's command to begin. Harry immediately cast a mage shield and poured power into it. He didn't think Hermione would cast any spells which would breach it right away considering she probably felt the best he could do was a protego shield. Almost at once spells began smacking against his shield. Harry waited a moment to gauge her power before she quickly changed tactics.

A flock of birds erupted out of her wand and rapidly became hawks which dived around his shield wall. As Harry rapidly shifted the wall into a bubble, Hermione leapt forward and actually kicked his shield in hopes of knocking it (and Harry) off the platform. The extra power

he had pumped into his shield held but only barely since enclosing himself had thinned the shield. Harry quickly cast a *sidus fragor* spell, a much smaller version of the *deas lux* spell he had used in London. As everyone in the class gave out a startled shout at the brilliant flash of light, Harry gave Hermione a small shove with his wandless magic to move her away so his wall of fire he conjured wouldn't fry her like it did her conjured hawks. Harry couldn't help but wonder if they tasted like chicken.

As he dropped his wall of fire he quickly saw that Hermione had vanished. His first thought was to cast an *aguamenti* charm to hose the area down since it was obvious she had disillusioned herself. However he realized she might be ready with a freezing charm and then banish the ice back at him. If she wanted to be sneaky he would show who was a secret Slytherin! He ramped up his mage shield a bit and then cast a *totus nox* spell. Again shouts rang out as suddenly the platform was covered in darkness like a batch of Peruvian Darkness power had been used. He quickly conjured two snakes and then a quick silence spell to cover him and his instructions to his snakes. He sent one forward and one behind in case she had moved past him.

Harry moved cautiously to his left to get away from his start point. This proved to be his undoing as he stepped on what seemed to be a metal plate which quickly wrapped around his foot. It then shot into the air carrying him past the limits of his darkness spell. His shield almost failed when a bludgeoning spell crashed into him.

Bloody hell this was getting out of hand Harry thought. With a shout he pushed his magic against the ceiling forcing him back into his darkness field. The brutal shove against the levitation spell caused Hermione to let out a startled gasp due to the magical backlash. Harry mentally urged the closest snake toward the noise while dislodging the metal trap on his leg which was starting to transform into chains. He let out his own startled gasp when a fireball crashed against his mage shield. It held but it banished his darkness spell.

Unfortunately for Hermione the sudden return of light allowed Harry to see his snake already coiling around Hermione's disillusioned leg. Before she could react Harry quickly cast an *engorgio* charm on the snake. It rapidly grew to about 3 meters long and easily trapped Hermione in a crushing hug. Harry couldn't help but think this was rather poetic justice for all the monster hugs he had endured over

the years. Harry stood and canceled Hermione's disillusion spell. He was about to use the expelliarmus charm on her but figured Snape would consider that a low level spell. The engorgio charm was pushing it as it was. However before he could think of a way of disarming her Snape called out, "Mr. Black is the victor. Banish your snake and both of you step down off the platform."

Harry looked at Snape who had a smug look on his face for some reason. "I must say Ms. Granger a very impressive performance. One might even say you had certain...fire. Five points to Gryffindor. Mr. Black, once again you seem to be showing a certain affinity to snakes. How very un-Gryffindor of you."

Harry didn't care if hadn't scored any House points. He was just happy Snape didn't give him a zed like he normally did in potions. His happiness faded as he turned and banished his snake. As he did so he saw that Hermione had the same look of anger on her face she had right before she had slapped him the night before.

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EMPTY CLASSROOM, HOGWARTS, OCTOBER 6th – EVENING

"Uh...I can explain?" Harry said in a small voice. He knew this wasn't going to be good.

Millie wiped some of Harry's seed off her chin and licked it off her fingers in a sultry fashion. "What's to explain Harry? We're just sealing a deal between our two houses. Happens all the time in the Wizarding world."

Harry wasn't sure what to do. Quite frankly his body was still recovering from the monster orgasm he had just had. While not a looker, Millie had coaxed the most intense orgasm of his life out of him and he was a bit dazed because of it. So with his mind a bit fuzzy Harry found himself just staring at Hermione while hoping somehow this wouldn't turn into a disaster. Hermione, at least, also seemed a bit out of it due to the surprise orgasm even if her face was filled with anger.

Millie however seemed to be the least affected. She started to rub what was left of Harry's cum into her skin. "You are such a find Harry! I mean what witch would turn away from a wizard who makes

sure his date cums during foreplay? Thanks for the lotion by the way," Millie said in a sultry voice as she made a show of rubbing Harry's cum on her tits.

Harry was entranced by the sight and his cock began to twitch again and harden. A quick glance showed that Hermione had also gotten distracted by Millie's teasing display. The Slytherin witch grinned as she saw how she had both Gryffindors raptly watching her.

"Ah do like this as well Hermione? It feels wonderful. You should try it some time. Harry here has already admitted he's a tit-man. You've got a pretty good set of paps yourself. Maybe you should take your blouse off and let Harry see them, yah?" Millie said with a smile and an evil glint in her eye.

Harry's dick hardened to its fullest at this idea. He had fantasized about Hermione's breasts since 4th year. Even more arousing was how Hermione's hands instantly went to her shirt. She'd unbuttoned the top two buttons before she seemed to realize what she was doing and stopped herself.

Seeing Hermione's hesitation and Harry's obvious look of disappointment spurred Millie on further. While she and the Gryffindor prefect had made inroads on patching up their relationship since they had to work together didn't mean Millicent was not above teasing the bookworm. So she took her wand and cast a quick lubrication spell on her breasts. She then reached out and took Harry's penis and nestled it in the valley between her tits. Another quick sticking charm kept her breasts together and trapping Harry's cock between them.

Harry was unable to keep from moaning as Millie began to move a bit to entice Harry to act. Like a puppet on a string Harry began to slowly tit-fuck the Slytherin witch. The feeling was utterly brilliant! Harry had always wanted to do this with Katie but he could never get the nerve up to ask. He had always felt it a bit selfish since he had felt she'd do all the work and he'd get all the pleasure. Millie obviously had figured the way around that as one hand played with a nipple as the other was in her knickers.

As erotic as it was seeing his prick thrust between Millie's magnificent mounds, Harry couldn't help but keep looking back at Hermione. The bushy-haired witch seemed stunned as she watched

Harry's cock go back and forth between Millie's tits. Harry could see Hermione's erect nipples sticking through her blouse and he ached to see them.

Millie seemed to read his mind as she teased Hermione in a husky voice. "Do you like this Hermione? Doesn't it look like fun? It feels even better than it looks and I'm betting it looks brilliant! She licked her lips theatrically and arched her back a bit and let out a moan of pleasure. "Oh Hermione, if you could only know what this feels like! You really should take off your top. I bet Harry would like that, wouldn't you Harry?"

"Oh fuck yeah," Harry said without even realizing he'd said it. The chance to fulfill two fantasies at once filled him. He'd fuck Millie's tits until he came and then he'd shoot all over Hermione's breasts. The image drove him to start to fuck Millie's tits faster in lustful need. His aura seemed to pulse which caused both witches to give out an involuntary gasp of pleasure.

Again Hermione's hands unconsciously undid a few more buttons which finally exposed her bra. Her cheeks were flushed and both Harry and Millie could see her squirming and causing her thighs to rub together. Her eyes were still glued to Harry's cock as he fucked Millie faster.

"Come on Hermione; let's see those paps of yours! I mean it's very rude to keep them covered up when Harry here seems more interested in yours than in mine!" Millie said slyly. She wasn't angry with Harry for being obviously entranced with Hermione since most people were pretty sure the two secretly lusted after each other but were too stupid to realize it. It was fun tweaking the both of them. Plus between his cock and his aura and her own ministrations Millie was close to cumming herself.

"Yes...oh Hermione...yeah!" Harry stuttered. For some reason between his last monster orgasm coupled with the tit-fucking and possibility of finally seeing Hermione breasts had Harry in a need driven fog. The image of his hot, silvery cum shooting all over her breasts drove him wild. Worse, there was the desire to see her face covered with his cum. It was just such a dirty image; the oh-so-clean Hermione moaning in desire as he showered her with his spunk. Somewhere inside of him there was a place that felt bad about

thoughts but the bulk of Harry couldn't help but be turned on by them.

Again his aura ramped up even more and Millie moaned in lust as this drove her to orgasm. Hermione gasped and looked like she might have had a small one herself since one hand dropped down and gave her crotch a rub or two before she brought up both hands to rub her breasts.

"Hermione...please!" Harry practically whined.

Her face had taken on a rather spacey look as she continued to watch his cock; Hermione finally undid the front catch to her bra and exposed them both. They were of a nice size and Harry saw her nipples were large and erect as well. Not as big as Luna's but very nice. Harry suddenly wished they were in his mouth.

The sight of Hermione's naked breasts along with the thought of her hard nipples in his mouth was suddenly too much for Harry. The silky feeling of Millie's slick breasts were very different from the pussy or bum of the witches he had had before and it felt like his orgasm just appeared out of nowhere instead of the familiar build up Harry was used to. He had only enough time to give out a strangled cry of "Oh God!" before he erupted all over Millie.

Millie had planned to suck him back into her mouth as he came but the blast of his aura on top of her previous orgasm drove conscious thought from her. All she could do was moan and thrash in ecstasy as his cock unloaded another round of hot jism all over her.

For Harry it was all he could do not to collapse as the powerful orgasm ripped through him. His body seemed on auto-pilot as his hips continued to pump back and forth as he came. Harry could hear his toe's crack as they curled and he felt like his whole body was being shot out his cock. Harry couldn't even do more than cry out in repeated unintelligible grunts and cries of pleasure.

Harry was barely aware of how Hermione's eye's had rolled back and she'd collapsed back against the door as her own orgasm claimed her. While she didn't make a sound, her breathing was hot, heavy and loud. Somewhere deep in Harry's brain a thought struck him how typical this was of Hermione; she'd not make a sound to let people know she was cumming. Harry just couldn't see her letting

Lavender or Parvati hear her cum back in the dorms before they had learned silencing spells.

For a full five minutes the trio was in a daze as they all struggled to come down from their orgasmic high. Millie recovered first. She used her wand to release her breasts as well as do a few quick scourgify spells. She put her bra and blouse back on and straightened out her skirt. While Harry and Hermione continued to pant she got up and kissed Harry on the cheek.

"Anytime you feel the need for some 'support' from House Bulstrode, you look me up! Okay there Lord Black?" Millie said with a hungry smile as Harry just nodded dumbly back at her.

Millie walked over to the door and reached out and cupped Hermione's breasts, fingering her still erect nipples for a second. Hermione gasped but before she could struggle, the bigger witch leaned in and whispered loud enough for Harry to hear, "What lovely paps you have. If you want maybe you can drop by the prefect baths after patrol tonight and look me up. I bet you still have a lot of pent up energy that need some help releasing, yah?" As Hermione looked at the Slytherin girl in shock, Millie moved her out of the doorway. With a final wink at her, Millie quietly left.

In the silence Harry and Hermione just stared at each other for a bit before they both seemed to realize they were both partially naked and hurriedly set to getting themselves presentable in a very uncomfortable silence.

Harry got done first and he waited till Hermione looked back at him before he took a few steps toward her. "Hermione, I..."

The slap on his face was a shock as was the sudden venomous look on Hermione's face.

"Hermione!" Harry cried out in shock.

"Don't 'Hermione' me, Harry James Potter! How could you? How could you do that with her? Of all the witches in Hogwarts I find you slumming with her?" Hermione hissed like Crookshanks at his angriest.

"That's not fair, Hermione! I'm trying to reach out and break people away from the Dark families! Besides what do you really know about Millie?" Harry shot back stung at the hatred which was laced in Hermione's words.

'Millie is it? Oh so you're probably going to be slutting it up with Blaise and Pansy next? Let me guess, you'll try for a two-fer with Tracey and Daphne next? Going to shag yourself silly and excuse it as some noble calling?" Hermione shot back coldly.

"I told you yesterday this might be all I get in life so excuse me if I actually enjoy myself a bit!" Harry replied.

"Oh please, Harry!" Hermione sneered. "That has got to be the oldest trick in the book! 'I might not live till tomorrow; let's shag!' I thought so much better of you, Harry! I thought you'd at least stick with decent witches"

Harry's shock at Hermione started his aura tingling with anger; neither noticed how the room got colder as it did so. "Oh so Millie isn't a 'decent' witch? Who are you to judge? You and her didn't get along so she doesn't count as decent? You don't get along with Lavender very well either! Is she bad too? Besides if you remember I was rather entranced with a witch I've always thought was decent. Or did you forget that?"

Hermione's eyes narrowed and she suddenly slapped Harry again, "I can't keep you from having your sick fantasies when you're wanking it in the shower but keep me out of them!"

"Sick fantasies? Excuse me for finding you attractive! Some thanks I get for being one of the few to notice how you're not only a girl but becoming a beautiful one as well!" Harry said icily.

Hermione gave a wordless grunt of disgust as she flung open the door. "Don't try to butter me up, 'Lord Black' since it is obvious that I was wrong about you all along. I guess there is something to all this blood lines stuff. You get your family ring and now you are just like the rest of them! Maybe Snape has been right about you being like your father all along!"

"Hermione!" Harry cried out angrily but the witch had already slammed the door.

Harry rubbed his cheek to lessen the sting as he just stared at the door. Just as he feared, his new found desire to act like a normal teenager wasn't going to sit well with his prudish friend. Ron was lost to him if he'd ever truly been his friend. Now his oldest friend seemed lost as well.

Harry let out a long sigh and made his way back to his rooms. Hopefully Luna and Lilith were there. Between the two he figured one of them would cheer him up.

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D.A.D.A. CLASSROOM, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 7th – AFTERNOON

Harry made his way back to his seat while Snape called up Anthony Goldstein and Megan Jones to duel. The thoughts of the previous night weighed heavily upon him. He couldn't shake the idea how Hermione wanted to not only beat him but possibly humiliate him...maybe even hurt him. That last fireball could have put him in a world of hurt if his shield had failed. Nothing Madam Pomfrey couldn't patch up quickly but enough to make him hurt like the devil for awhile. Like growing bones back, regrowing burnt skin wasn't a picnic in the park as Cedric had told him back in 4th year after he had had to go through it after being burned in the First Task.

Harry's concerns were mirrored on both Susan and Padma's faces when he got back to his seat. He didn't really want to say anything even though he could tell Susan was dying to talk about it. Harry just met her eyes and made a slight movement of his head towards the next table over where all the students were doing a very obvious job of trying hard not to listen to whatever might be said.

So they watched Anthony duel Megan. The Ravenclaw easily out-duelled the Hufflepuff in less than two minutes. Susan made a slight gesture towards the pair, "You see? That's pretty much what has happened every time a D.A. member goes up against someone you didn't train Harry. I think we're going to see a lot of new people showing up whenever you start up the meetings."

Harry nodded. He noticed right away it wasn't the spells Anthony had used but the confidence he exhibited during the duel. He also

moved more. Harry had drilled into them last year how staying in one place was a good way to end up on the wrong end of a curse. It was a lesson proven at the fight at the Department of Ministries all right.

While Snape called for Lavender to go up against Pansy, Susan went to work on her notes. While keeping her head down she quietly asked, "Harry, how did you do that speed thing? You did it against Ron and now against Draco. It was like he was standing still compared to you!"

Harry looked over at Padma who obviously was just as curious. "I'd tell you how Susan, but not here. In fact I'd like it if sometime soon you could come by my room. There is a lot of info I've come across recently which I believe you need to know. More importantly you're one of the few people I can trust with it."

Susan looked up in surprise. Harry just locked eyes with her and projected trust and sincerity through his aura. Susan looked to Padma who nodded in agreement. Susan looked back to Harry for a moment before nodding, "Okay Harry, you've got me all intrigued. I'll come by when I can."

"Pathetic! 20 points from Gryffindor due to a dazzling display of ineptitude Ms. Brown! And you, Ms. Parkinson, 10 points from Slytherin for obviously not studying! I would expect more of one from the older houses!" Snape called out in obvious disgust.

Harry looked back to see Pansy on the floor obviously suffering from a tickling charm. Susan sighed, "A tickling charm? Is that the best you could do Lavender?"

Padma nodded, "She is like Ronald lately; she doesn't take her studies seriously and drags people around her down. I fear for my sister. She has been off all term and I think it is Lavender's fault."

Snape turned back towards the class in a flourish of his robes. "I see some of you have applied yourself while others seem to doubt my resolve to teach you the skills which might one day keep you alive. Very well, we shall see. I want everyone in the dueling room now!"

The class dissolved into a mass of students as they all tried to pair up with people they hoped they would get to duel as they filed into

the adjacent dueling room. Harry hung back against the wall and waited as while Snape started to choose who would duel who first. While he did so, Harry reached out and gave Padma's hand a reassuring squeeze. "I missed you last night. I was hoping we can talk. I don't want to push you but...well I would like to learn more about you."

Padma looked a bit guilty. "I'm sorry Harry but after what we got told last night I had to get away. To become a concubine and then learn that everything I thought about our world here in England might be wrong...it was too much."

Harry nodded, "I understand. I felt that way myself the day I got emancipated."

"Mr. Black! You will duel Mr. Runcorn!" Snape called out. Harry nodded to Padma as he made his way to the area Snape pointed to. Paul Runcorn got there first and the taciturn Slytherin squared off against him.

Harry watched as Snape continued to pair off the remainder of the class. He turned back to Runcorn who was just watching him with a faintly bored look on his face. "Hey Paul, no offense but I don't think you're in my league. Is there anything you want to work on? I don't have anything to prove so I won't mind you handing me my arse if you get some good training out of it."

The sandy haired Slytherin looked a bit angry at this before shrugging. "Don't think the Professor will go for that." he said in his usual clipped tones.

Harry grinned, "Well I'm used to Snape docking me points. So what'll it be?"

Runcorn thought about it for a bit before shrugging again, "Okay. I need to work on speed."

Harry smiled, "Alright, quick draw drills it is!"

Harry drew his wand and did some quick stretches in place. Snape finished pairing everyone up and drew his own wand and activated the 'eyes' in the ceiling above them all. These were floating orbs

which would record everyone's moves and allow Snape to view them later in an artifact similar to a pensieve.

Snape moved to a podium where he could watch the entire class. "You will duel for 10 minutes and then change partners! I will have your new partner on the board here. There will be no verbal casting! Begin!"

Harry instantly cast an expelliarmus charm on Runcorn whose wand shot from his hand and into Harry's. Harry just smiled as he gave it back to the stunned Slytherin. "Sorry, Paul, I just wanted you to see how fast I am. Now, how about we work on you casting spells while dodging? Not only can it save your life, it will build your speed."

Runcorn nodded dumbly but dropped back into a ready position. Soon the pair was deep into working on firing spells on the move. Harry was giving Paul some pointers when Snape's voice boomed out from behind him, "Mr. Black! Who is the teacher here? You or me?"

Harry turned to see Snape glaring at him. He was about to give a heated retort when he realized that in this case Snape was right. Harry inclined his head in apology, "I'm sorry Professor. I guess I got used to teaching last year. It won't happen again."

Only a slight raising of his eyebrows betrayed Snape's surprise at Harry's words. "See that it doesn't happen again, Mr. Black. What you do in your club is between you and the Headmaster but this is my classroom, not yours! 20 points from Gryffindor!"

Harry nodded again, "Yes, Professor." As much as he hated the git, Harry had to admit here he was in the right even if Harry didn't agree with him.

Snape looked at the clock on the wall and called out, "Change partners to the one shown on the board. Remember! No verbal casting! Do not think for a moment I will not catch you mumbling them under your breath!"

Harry was turned and was surprised to see he was paired up with Padma. He saw her talking with Blaise who must have been her last dueling partner. He waved her over. It took a few minutes for everyone to get with their new partners. Harry knew from the

previous term how Padma tended to duel like many Ravenclaws (as well as Hermione) in that she'd often hesitate while trying to figure out the best spell to use. Harry had tried to break her (and others) of this habit during D.A. meetings. He had reiterated what the faux Professor Moody had said about a weak spell cast was better than the best spell which never got off in time.

While Snape made his way back to his podium Harry leaned closer to Padma as many around him were watching him. "So anything you want me to do?"

Padma thought about it for a moment before shrugging. "Let me do my best and you do what you feel is necessary."

Harry nodded in agreement while noticing Hermione watching him as she squared off against Tracey Davies. Harry hoped she'd be paying attention to her own duel since Tracey was a brawler and had a nasty reputation of making even a training duel a personal grudge match. Not that he doubted Hermione's abilities but Harry was worried the tension between the two friends might throw her off her game.

Snape called out for them all to begin again from his podium. Harry cast a standard protego shield and waited to see what Padma would do. Padma started to do the wand movements of a decent cutting curse when a look of confusion crossed her face. She shook her head like she was trying to clear it and tried again. Once again she got about half-way through the motions when she looked confused and stopped.

Harry chanced a quick glance at Snape and sure enough he was looking their way. Harry shot off a quick stupefy in hopes he'd look elsewhere. Surprisingly Padma fell to the ground as if she had no defensive spells up. This surprised Harry since he knew Padma was very good with defensive spells. With a frown he enervated her.

Padma quickly jumped to her feet with an embarrassed blush. She clutched her wand fiercely and at Harry's nod began to duel again. However almost at once she got half-way through a rather nasty bone-breaker curse Hermione had found the meeting before Umbridge had found them out before Padma once again seemed unable to finish the spell.

"Are you okay Padma?" Harry asked.

"I'm fine! Just duel!" Padma said crossly.

Harry knew Padma was as fiercely competitive as Hermione so he fired off a very minor jinx just to be seen doing something. To Harry's surprise the jelly-leg jinx worked and once again Padma hit the floor.

With a muffled curse, Padma dispelled the curse and leapt to her feet with a determined look on her face. She tried at least three spells by Harry's count, all of which failed, to her obvious astonishment.

"Ms. Patil, I would have thought better of you! Are you trying to curry favor with the new Lord Black or have you somehow lost the ability to cast the simplest of curses?"

Harry turned to see Snape glaring at Padma from where he'd obviously had been coaching Hermione and Tracey.

Padma blushed an even deeper shade of red and lowered her head in shame, "I'm sorry Professor. I seem to be having some...issues with my wand or something."

"Bah! There is nothing wrong with your wand Ms. Patil! Mr. Black, stay put and don't move!" Snape commanded before turning back to Padma. Harry's heart sank as he noticed quite a number of the students had paused in their dueling to watch.

Snape gestured to Padma, "Ms. Patil...a curse if you please." Snape seemed to be enjoying the discomfort which was evident on the Ravenclaw's face. Harry had a sudden feeling he was missing something important as Padma raised her wand.

Padma's wand perfectly traced the pattern of a boil-inducing hex but before she could finish the spell her hands began to shake. She tried again and again she could not finish the spell. She looked down in misery at her shoes; she couldn't meet Snape's glare.

"Ms. Patil...that was a truly pathetic display. I would take points from Ravenclaw but this is obviously something to do only with you.

Again! I want to see a spell on Mr. Black or you'll be doing detention with me tonight!" Snape said with his customary sneer.

Padma raised her wand with a pained look but then lowered it in defeat. Snape frowned but before he could speak Hermione cut him off. "Professor, you can't punish Padma. It isn't her fault she can't attack Har...Mr. Black."

The feeling he'd missed something crystallized into what was going on and Harry almost gasped at the truth of it. He desperately looked at Hermione and tried to convey how she needed to shut it before she spilled the secret Harry had hoped to keep for as long as possible.

"And why is that Ms. Granger? Do regale us with your insight." Snape asked with sarcasm dripping from his words.

Almost the entire class seemed to be watching as Hermione looked affronted at Snape's tone, "Padma can't attack Harry since she's his bound concubine. Concubines can't attack their master. I looked it up yesterday after Harry told me about bonding her. You can't punish her for something she simply cannot do."

Harry's heart sank as the room erupted in cries of surprise followed up by a hubbub of students all talking over each other. As on who had pledged not to spy on him, Hermione just up and told everyone one of his secrets. Harry couldn't help but feel she'd done so to get back at him for having sex with Millie the night before. While it was her nature to expound on her ideas, she'd given out more info than Snape had needed.

Worse, Harry saw triumph in Snape's eyes as he smirked and said, "Indeed? Well then this does put a different spin on things. Very well Ms. Patil, you are excused from attacking your master. Switch places with Ms. Davies." Padma looked stricken as the room was filled with heated comments while it seemed every eye was on her.

Harry felt anger building in him. It was obvious now Snape already knew about his bonding to Padma and he'd set Harry up by pairing them together. Snape had wanted to out their bond. Harry glared at Snape. His aura flared and around his wand a glow began to form. The temperature in the room began to rapidly drop.

Snape noticed it and snapped, "Mr. Black, control yourself! I will have none of that in my classroom!"

Harry locked eyes with his father's favorite prey and continued to let his magic build regardless of Director Bones' warning. His breath began to fog as the temperature around him fell even more. His wand, however, felt hot in his hand. While his focus was on the greasy haired wizard who had done nothing but torment him since he was eleven, Harry couldn't help but hear the comments from all around him. He'd already heard far too many lewd comments for his liking. All because Snape couldn't see past his father's face!

Harry face broke into a feral grin. It was time for payback and it was obvious Snape realized he was about to reap the whirlwind as his own wand shot out from his wand holster. Their eyes locked as they had done back in the Headmaster's office before Flitwick had broken them up. Murderous intent flashed between them and every student close enough could almost feel the hatred pass between them.

In a hissing voice which almost sounded like Parseltongue Harry said, "Severus Snape...I, Harry James Potter, son of James Charles Potter do release you from the life-debt you incurred when my father saved you from being killed by a werewolf."

Snape blinked in surprise as magic flared around him, "What is the meaning of this?" he asked in obvious confusion.

Harry laughed a laugh which promised pain and suffering. "It means I don't want anything holding you back when we start to duel, Snivellus. I've had enough of your hate, your pettiness and you messing with my life. Plus it is high time for Sarah Underhill to rest in peace with her murderer finally dead to say nothing of you taking half the prophecy back to your master Voldemort! Pettigrew may have betrayed my family but it was you who set the whole train of events in motion which led to their deaths!"

A collective gasp went up but before either Harry or Snape could move Padma broke into tears at a comment from Seamus and fled the room. It was enough of a distraction to mute Harry's rage and remind him of what was truly important. Just as Luna had been there for him now Harry needed to be there for Padma. He took a deep breath and stepped away from the killing lust which had consumed him.

"I'm done with this class so don't bother taking any points from me, you worthless excuse of a human being. I'll pass my NEWTs without your so called lessons." Harry looked over to where Hermione was watching before looking back at Snape. "This isn't over...it is only delaying the inevitable."

Harry turned and started to walk away when Snape called out, "Potter! I'll have you expelled for this!"

Harry whipped around to face his ex-DADA teacher. "Are Slytherins fucking broken records? Draco has vowed either he, his father or Voldemort will 'make me pay' since I first came to Hogwarts and I'm still here! You've been trying to get me expelled since I was a Firstie and I'm STILL HERE!" Harry shouted.

Snape went an interesting shade of purple (as did Draco) but Harry cut him off. "Even if you get me expelled it is fine with me. I don't need a piece of paper telling me I can do magic properly. The dead Death Eaters in London are enough of a diploma for me! So kicking me out of Hogwarts just means you go from being a teacher to just another Death Eater in my eyes. So perhaps you should think about that before tromping up to the Headmasters office!"

Again Harry and Snape locked eyes but it was the older wizard who looked away from the intensity which burned behind the eyes which could have belong to Lily Evans. Harry looked once again at Hermione who had an indeterminate look on her face before he turned and left the DADA classroom for good.

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SHRIEKING SHACK, SCOTLAND – OCTOBER 7th – EVENING

A movement in the twilight caught Harry's attention. He looked out the window to see a young stag nibbling on some foliage protected from the snow by a bit of the fence which had half-way fallen over during some storm. The stag was joined by a doe and the pair ate for a bit before some sound coming up from Hogsmeade startled them.

Harry thought of his parents as he watched the two animals bounded away into the forest. What would they have said about his

actions today? Would they be happy he had not given into hate or be angry how he had let Snape play him? Worse, would they be disappointed in him because the man who had set in motion events that led to their death was still alive?

The silence of the house suited Harry's mood at the moment. With only the wind and occasional creak of the house settling to break the silence Harry was able to work on clearing his mind. Unlike himself, Riddle had been properly taught how to clear his mind. Of course Riddle hadn't had Snape as his occlumency teacher if 'teaching' could describe the mind rape Snape had done to him last term. For all the horror in Riddle's memories, it was times like this when those memories helped Harry deal with his own problems.

Harry needed to center himself and think. Today's almost fight with Snape and his executing of Smith showed Harry a side of himself he needed to work on. He had stupidly thought how his new found desire for sex was the only thing he had to deal with. However the burning rage he had felt when facing Snape reminded Harry that anger and aggression was often the mark of a teenage male. At a time when Harry had to work to be mature, clever and clear-headed he was trapped in a body which easily led him down the path to rage.

While his defuser could help him mute his aura it did nothing to help him deal with the passions of a young male. Passions which had been kept dormant and muted leaving Harry unsure how to deal with them. Harry looked back at his actions last term and realized how his sexuality had barely broken through the bindings whereas his anger had gotten through enough to make him seem a 'normal' surly teen.

Harry sighed and tried to console himself with the thought that between Riddle's soul fragment and the horcrux scar linking him to Voldemort probably helped the process. However the truth might be he had a temper. He hadn't heard much about his parents having a fierce temper but while he was James and Lily Potter's son, he was not them. They hadn't grown up as he had. Harry had to admit to himself he was probably a wellspring of bottled up rage. He would have to be careful.

Harry looked at his watch and sighed again. Most of the students would be at dinner so now would be a good time to head back. Harry also wanted to the teachers to be busy with their meals as

well. He was getting very tired of being called up to the Headmasters office and right now he didn't want to face Dumbledore or McGonagall. Hopefully Padma would join him after dinner. He had been unable to find where the distraught witch had fled to after the disaster in the DADA classroom. Of course he did need to drop by and see Katie and tell her about the brooms.

Harry opened the door down to the passageway back to Hogwarts. Immediately sounds wafted up since he had passed the edge of the silencing charm he'd put on the door. Harry walked down and nodded politely to the goblin workers who were improving the corridor. They all gave curt nods in return; he was their current employer after all. It was still a long trip back to Hogwarts but at least when the goblins were done it would be a much smoother one. Harry smiled and thought he might get some small bikes and keep them at both ends to make travel quicker once the project was complete.

The passageway was cool if not downright cold and Harry's breath fogged as he walked. For a minute Harry thought to cast a warming charm when a thought hit him of a way he could get back to Hogwarts faster and stay warm in the process. He smiled at this plan; it would help take his mind of things and make it easier to deal with the Whomping Willow as well.

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Ginny Weasley stared out over the lake as the last rays of sunlight disappeared over the mountains ringing Hogwarts. She shivered and wrapped her cloak tighter around her. One reason she disliked the coming of winter was how it made her favorite place to think uncomfortable. Using warming charms kept one from getting too cold but it would invariably melted the snow which then needed to be constantly banished...which would then refreeze into ice. She'd fallen on her bum quite a few times over her years at Hogwarts leaving her thinking spot in the winter.

These thoughts were mere flotsam over the darker thoughts which churned in the depths of her mind. Gryffindor House was in an uproar. For all the efforts of prefects like Neville had come to nothing with Hermione's amazing words about Padma being Harry's concubine. This news coming on top of Smith's murder, Ron's fight with Harry, his killing of Death Eaters along with all the work the

Daily Prophet had done to smear Harry's reputation had finally broken the House into factions.

Ginny had left when the House discussion went from somewhat orderly to shouting. Sadly the amount of people backing Harry was amazingly small. Ginny realized she shouldn't be surprised. With Ron's fight and now Hermione angry at Harry about the bonding, he had lost his usual supporters. Although she had to admit Ron normally didn't do a good job of backing Harry up when he wasn't around.

People like Neville, Katie and Colin were staunchly supporting Harry. They tried to show this and that with facts and logic only to be shouted down by other Gryffindors livid at how Harry had betrayed the honor of the House. Gryffindors were all about doing the right thing. Concubines were practically slaves (sex slaves at that) and here was Harry taking one for himself! Worse it was the twin of one of their own. Hermione was in full rant mode about this and her speaking out against Harry had swayed a log of the undecided Gryffindors.

Ginny also saw how most of the House believed Harry had murdered Smith because the staff believed so, damn the dearth of evidence. Even though no DMLE report had designated Harry as an official suspect, he'd already been found guilty in the court of Gryffindor opinion. A few of the 7th Years had even been pushing the old idea that perhaps Harry had been the Heir of Slytherin all along and had covered his tracks like a evil Slytherin would.

Ginny had left after those comments started to get taken seriously by many in the room. Ginny, however, was conflicted. Ginny thought she knew the reason for Hermione's sudden turn against Harry and it had nothing to really do about him and all about her. The same applied to the red-head as well. She knew her own anger at Harry was because he had a girl now and that girl wasn't her. Ginny also had seen how Harry had acted around Katie and realized Harry had never looked at her with even a quarter of the affection Harry's face had when he talked with Katie. All the other stuff was rubbish but Ginny was finding it hard to get over how another nail in the coffin that was her old crush on Harry had been hammered home. This on top of the fact it didn't matter anymore considering who she really loved.

Ginny's confusion about the whole situation was made worse when she had heard Hermione cursing him the night before in the shower. Ginny had been in there late in hopes of masturbating in the shower. She hadn't wanted to do it after the days Quidditch practice due to what McGonagall had said. That and the whole team were down after the talking to Katie had passed on from McGonagall. So Ginny had waited till there shouldn't have been anyone showering back up in the Gryffindor girl's bathroom. She'd been halfway to her own orgasm with her favorite fantasy of Harry surprising her in the Quidditch locker room and taking her hard against her locker when Hermione had stormed in.

The prefect had all but torn her clothes off before taking one of the stalls uncomfortably close to Ginny's. Luckily she never masturbated with the water running. There was never enough hot water back at the Burrow and so Ginny had gotten used to playing with herself, getting off and then showering. Thus she was sure Hermione hadn't realized she was there and could hear her talking to herself in anger.

What Ginny heard had astounded her! If Hermione's rant was true, Harry had been having sex with Luna and Lilith. This didn't really surprise Ginny as both witches were pretty and Ginny knew from first hand experience how talented Luna could be in bed at least when it came to girl-sex. Yet it was hearing how Harry also had had sex with Narcissa Black and Millicent Bulstrode which really blew her mind. Ginny's astonishment was further compounded by listening Hermione continue on talking to the Slytherin girl like she was there. What really shocked the red-head was it soon became very apparent that not only was Hermione ranting but also masturbating while she did so!

Ginny's eyes had grown wide listening to Hermione say things like, "Oh I'm sure you want me to look at those huge tits of yours!" or "I'll bet you would like to watch me play with my nipples!" and other even more startling comments like "Yes, Harry...fuck her tits! Fuck them hard!" Even more shocking was Ginny could also tell from Hermione's voice that she was getting more and more turned on. This was confirmed when a comment about Millie wanting to meet in the prefects bath ended in a long, pleasure-filled moan followed by a thump as Hermione slumped against the wall of the shower. Ginny was wide-eyed as she heard her older friend continue with a few more, "Yes! Yes! Oh yeah...oh yeah...Aahhh!" Again a long moan,

with a lot more feeling, left no doubt in Ginny's mind Hermione had come and then kept going and had cum again.

For a minute or two, Ginny could hear Hermione panting over the sound of the running water. Then Hermione had then quietly finished up her shower and had left. Ginny had quickly brought herself off since listening to Hermione jilling off had been the most erotic thing she'd ever heard. When she came down from her orgasmic high and was showering, Ginny thought about what she had heard. None of it made any sense.

This confusion was another reason Ginny was out in the cold night air. She was trying to piece together so many conflicting pieces of information. Why had Hermione been in the Gryffindor showers and not the prefect's bath? It sounded an awfully like whatever had happened that night between Harry and Millicent had Hermione there watching as well. Was that the reason she hadn't used the prefect's bath? She was avoiding Millie? The very idea of Hermione and Millicent engaging in girl sex sounded absurd but from Hermione's comments while she pleased herself in the shower seemed to contradict that. None of it made any sense especially considering how straitlaced Hermione was.

If Harry had been having sex with the Slytherin and Hermione had been there watched as it seemed why was she so angry at Harry? Ginny knew Hermione carried a torch for Harry big enough to light Hogsmeade with. Ultimately it wouldn't matter since Harry wasn't hers. Ginny smiled at the thought of who Harry truly belong to and her sex tingled with the thought.

"Well, well, what do we have here?"

Ginny turned and saw Draco Malfoy looking at her with his typical superior look on his face. She covertly drew her wand, "What do you want Malfoy?"

Draco casually walked up to her looking like he didn't have a care in the world. "I'm just checking up on you. I made a promise to your brother to keep you out of Harry Potter's clutches."

Ginny laughed derisively, "Pull the other one, Malfoy. Like my brother of all people would ever talk to you."

Draco laughed as well, "Yes it does sound impossible but maybe after his supposed best mate had kicked him in the stones and made him look like a fool in front of all his friends got Ron thinking it was time for a change. Not only am I looking out for you but I thought you might profit from what your brother and I talked about."

Ginny's eyes narrowed. "What do you want Malfoy?" She said after a bit.

Draco shook his head, "You Weasleys are so damn predictable! Your brother said that about three times to me before he got shipped off to hospital. I'll tell you the same thing I told him. You need to start thinking about your House, your life and how you want things to go in the future." Seeing the look in Ginny's eyes, Draco waved his hands as if to ward off smoke. "No, no, I'm not talking about anything to do with the Dark Lord. Regardless of whether the Dark Lord wins or that old buffoon and his Golden Boy wins the fact remains is the magical Houses remain."

"This matters to me how again?" Ginny interrupted.

"Patience is a virtue they say; you should try it!" Draco said with a hint of his normal sneer. "Like I told your brother, the Light won the war and yet which families are still strong and still mostly running England? Look at your family and how they come from a long line of Purebloods but instead of helping families like mine keep our traditions; they've been used as fodder for Dumbledore and gotten nothing in return."

Draco leaned closer, "You almost died as did your father and you still live in squalor. My father got stupidly caught in the very Ministry itself and he's already out! Dark and Light are just labels used on whatever power happens to be running things for the moment. Yet it is the Houses which endure! I told your brother and now I'm telling you that you need to stop thinking about the Dark Lord and Dumbledore and start thinking how House Weasley will come out in the end."

Ginny gritted her teeth, "Make your pitch, Malfoy!"

Draco smiled, "Well I must say you are the smart Weasley. I practically had to hit your brother over the head before he got to ready to actually listen to my message. So here it is. If the Dark Lord

wins, your family is in for some hard times. You'll almost assuredly be married off to someone like Avery's brother or maybe Bulstrode's. You'll still be poor and still be the butt of Pureblood societies' jokes. If Dumbledore wins...well nothing will change will it? You'll still be poor and the laughing stock of our society. You need to start looking out for coming out ahead regardless of who wins and that means you need to look for different allies."

Draco leaned closer and Ginny couldn't help but lean back as if Draco's message was infectious. "You're brother and I have come to an understanding and in return for looking after you while he's gone, he's going to help me with my problem. Ron has seen how little he's gotten for being the mere shadow to Dumbledore's Golden Boy."

Draco grinned evilly, "Although it is starting to look like that gold is tarnishing a bit of late! What I want from you is to keep away from Potter. He's going to try and get his hooks into you to say nothing of other body parts. You allow that and you'll be forever associated with him. You step back and you can still be seen by the players as someone who can think for herself and not be a pawn. Remember, your two older brothers couldn't stand being pawns so they left the country and Percy openly denounces Dumbledore. The Twins don't count since it is obvious they are apolitical. Now Ron is seeing the light in regards to the Boy-Who-Lies. Maybe you should as well?"

Draco straightened up and patted Ginny on the shoulder, "You think on all that. I'm not asking you to take the Dark Mark or anything. I'm just asking you to think of the future of your House and where its place in society could be. With the players or with the scrubs. You're to bright, powerful and pretty to be a scrub, Ginny Weasley."

Ginny couldn't help but smile at the last bit. She knew Draco was trying to play her but the real question was what if he was right? Unlike Ron who seemed content to bitch and moan and be jealous of Harry, Ginny had plans for her life and they didn't involve ending up like her parents. Of course Draco didn't realize Ginny already had a powerful ally of her own, one that would exalt her over all others.

However one thing nagged her. "What is Ron going to do for you, Draco?"

Draco readjusted his cloak before airily replying, "That is between your brother and me. If he wants to tell you that is up to him." Draco

turned and took a few steps before skidding to a shocked halt. The Slytherin stared down the path and couldn't help but stutter out a fearful, "No!"

Ginny quickly joined Draco by his side, wand out and ready. Ginny was ready for anything considering how a troll had gotten into the school the year before she came to Hogwarts. What she saw, however, was in many ways worse...or at least it was for Draco.

On the lawn not far away was a Grim. Ginny had read up on them after her Uncle Bilius had supposedly died after seeing one. She had seen Sirius' animagus form so she knew this was a Grim. However Sirius' hadn't been a tenth as menacing as the jet-black beast with burning green eyes which looked up at them.

Ginny couldn't help but reach out and grasp Draco for support. The Slytherin was obviously shaken and neither could seem to do more than watch as the Grim stared at them for a moment before bounding up the path in huge leaps leaving only huge paw prints in the snow to show it had been real.

Ginny heard Draco curse under his breath, "That couldn't have been a Grim! Someone is fucking with me! If it is Nott...I'll...oh he's going to regret the day he was born!"

Ginny shook her head. Of course that hadn't been a real Grim. Draco had plenty of enemies who had started to finally act against him. This had to be a plan to rattle him. She hugged herself and wondered if by some chance that had been a Grim would the next day be her last on Earth?

OoOoO

Harry waited under his invisibility cloak to see if Ginny was going to show up like he expected. After entering the castle, Harry positioned himself in a place Ginny should pass if she wanted to take the fastest way back to Gryffindor tower. Luckily Draco would take a different route if he wanted to head back to the dungeons.

Draco! Harry's canine hearing had heard the entire conversation since he had spied Draco walking toward where Harry knew was Ginny's favorite hidey-hole. What he had heard made him feel sad.

Harry had only begun to send out feelers about what had happened to House Potter's money. He had no proof House Weasley had profited from it but certain economic facts pointed to it being a reasonable assumption.

Narcissa had done some rough calculations and the amount the Weasleys appeared to have spent over the years compared to what they made showed a huge discrepancy. Since the Weasleys had been long, ardent supporters of Dumbledore it was the easiest explanation that they got the extra money from him. Already Harry had learned how Dumbledore hadn't touched any Ministry money in funding the Tri-Wizard Tournament. Harry frowned when he thought how Potter galleons might have inadvertently funded Voldemort's return to a material form.

So now Draco and Ron were conspiring together. Harry couldn't help but snort at this. He knew it was Draco playing Ron and the latter going along with it. Ron didn't have the drive to think up plots. He liked to think he was some kind of strategist because of his chess abilities but life wasn't chess. Besides Hermione did most of Ron's 'thinking' for him most of the time.

It didn't take much deduction to realize Ron was going to be used to help Draco try and defeat Harry in some way. In fact Harry realized that some of Narcissa's teachings must have sunk into Draco's thick skull after all. If Draco wanted to become Lord Malfoy-Black then he could not act directly against Harry anymore. So he needed someone else to do it. With Goyle staying out of things and Crabbe's abilities were marginal (on a good day!) it did leave Draco without many options. Going after Ron was actually a clever move on Draco's part Harry thought. The bait of keeping Ginny 'safe' from Harry was a good touch on Draco's part he had to admit.

Now the question would be how Ginny reacted to bait Draco had dangled in front of her. Of all the Weasleys, according to Luna, Ginny was the least likely to be tainted. Harry would have to see. Of course no matter what happened Ginny could never be that much of a threat with her tied to him by a life-debt. Hopefully Ginny would remember this and act accordingly. Both Snape and Pettigrew showed how owing a life-debt didn't keep you from making terrible choices.

Ginny finally rounded the corner with a worried look on her face. Harry waited till she passed the corridor he was in, thankful in how she was looking down at her feet and not being very aware of her surroundings. He counted to ten, pulled off his cloak and walked quickly to follow her.

"Ginny! Hey I've been looking for you! I tried your thinking place but I guess I just missed you!" Harry called out when he had closed with her.

The red-head gave a start. "Uhm...hey...hi," Ginny said. She couldn't meet his eyes. Harry had a pretty good idea why not. It didn't matter though; he had bigger fish to fry tonight. One of those fish had lots of bushy hair!

"Hi yourself. I wanted to ask if you had heard anything about Ron. Is he going to be okay? Neville tells me he thinks those Cognivores did more damage than the medi-wizards first thought." Harry said with fake sincerity. While in the Shrieking Shack Harry had remembered Director Bones' advice and knew he needed to seriously bank back his whole Harold Black personae and be a bit more of the old Harry Potter or too many would get suspicious. Sadly the anger he'd been feeling so much of lately went so well with his new Black identity.

"Oh...uhm no I haven't heard anything yet. Daddy owled earlier and said it would probably be a week before they knew anything." Ginny still wouldn't meet his eyes.

"Oh that's too bad. Hey, Gin, can you do me a favor?" Harry asked.

Ginny looked up with a face so guilty that Harry almost laughed. If he hadn't known what was going on the look on her face alone would have made him suspicious. Unconsciously echoing her earlier tone with Draco she asked, "What do you want?"

Harry smiled, "Well I haven't been to the Gryffindor common rooms since I got here. I thought now would be the time to make an appearance. Besides I need to talk to Katie about getting the team the new Nimbus 2001's. Since I don't know the current password I figured you could help me out."

Ginny flushed and looked at her feet. This wasn't the reaction Harry was expecting. However on a moments reflection it came to him

what probably what was going on. "Ginny, what's going on in the tower? Is something bad isn't it? Something about me? It's why you were out in your thinking place wasn't it?"

Ginny tried to look anywhere but at Harry's face. This confirmed what Harry suspected. What a surprise; his house-mates once again were casting him as a nutter. "Okay Ginny now I really need to get into the tower. Let's go." Harry took Ginny by the arm to get her moving since she seemed rooted to the spot for a moment. Trying to be Harry Potter again certainly hadn't lasted Harry thought bitterly as he practically had to drag Ginny along with him.

The pair silently made their way to Gryffindor tower. However before Ginny could give the password, the Fat Lady looked at Harry with disdain. "I don't think your kind is welcome here any longer, Mr. Potter."

Even though Harry had steeled himself to another round of being pilloried by his house mates he was shocked at the Fat Lady's tone. With a slight shake he got a grip on the anger which quickly boiled up at her words. "My kind? Well it is a good thing I'm Mr. Black so why don't you just shut it and let us in?" Harry said with icily.

At a pointed look from Harry, Ginny gave the password. The Fat Lady sniffed derisively but opened the portal. Instantly the sounds of argument spilled into the corridor. As luck would have it they were spotted first by Euan Abercrombie. Harry remembered how the boy had sucked in the lies the Prophet printed last term like mother's milk. Time hadn't made much difference as the Second Year practically screeched, "It's Potter!" The way he said it Harry half expected him to follow it up with, "Get him!"

While the students in the common room didn't have torches and pitchforks, the looks on the majority of the faces turning towards him were not friendly. Harry, however, was not going to let a bunch of students be stupid to form their own opinion intimidate him so he boldly strode into the room.

He looked around the room till he spotted Neville who looked very tired. "Hey Neville...have I come at a bad time?" Harry said with intentional sarcasm.

Again the room erupted in shouting before Valentine Gudgeon, the other 7th Year prefect, shot red sparks into the air with a bang. She looked at Harry coldly, "You're not welcome here Potter. We're conducting House business."

Harry theatrically pulled out his tie, looked at it and then put it back. "I'm sorry last time I checked I was still a Gryffindor regardless of being an emancipated lord. My tie colors seem to bear this fact out. So what are we discussing tonight?" Harry said with a knowing smirk.

Both Colin and Dennis Creevey giggled at this before a look from Hermione shut them up. "What Valentine meant, Mister Black, is we're having a House meeting regarding you. You shouldn't be here while we deliberate." Hermione's face mirrored the cold mask she had worn in Defense class earlier.

"Ah so you are thinking of censuring me correct?" Harry asked politely.

Hermione blinked in surprise, "Uhm...yes we are. How do you know about that?"

Harry grinned his normal lop-sided smile, "Well Hermione since you and I seem to be having a bit of a spat I decided I needed to read *Hogwarts: A History* since I couldn't rely on you anymore." Hermione's face flushed at the emphasis Harry put into his reply. Of course Harry still hadn't read the book. With Riddle's memories at his disposal he would never need to.

Neville spoke up, "Look Harry maybe it would be best if..."

"Best for whom, Neville?" Harry interrupted. "While this isn't a courtroom I still get to plead my own case. In fact if you check your books you will find you've already screwed up by meeting to censure me without informing me of this. Thus I haven't had any time to get character witnesses and the like together. So right now all you are is a mob yelling at each other."

"We don't need some fancy-schmancy rulebook to do what is right, you bastard!" Lavender cried out. "You're no better than the likes of Malfoy, Nott and Avery! I'm sure you'll be calling in Ginny's debt and make her another toy like poor Padma!" Harry noted how it was

Lavender who said this while Parvati stared sullenly at him but said nothing.

Seamus spoke up, "We don't want people in our tower who kick their friends in the stones! Ron was your best mate and you did him a bad turn!"

"And you've been hanging out with Slytherins!" Cormac called out from the couch where he lounged with two 4th year girls on either side of him.

"Oh he's done worse than 'hang out' with Slytherins!" Hermione spat out.

Comments came in from all sides about how he was a nutter, a murderer, a liar, a slaver and a traitor to the very name of Gryffindor. Harry just took it all in. His green eyes roamed the room and saw who kept quiet, who looked unhappy and who was livid. Sadly most were the latter.

Finally Harry had enough and said as much, "ENOUGH!" A brilliant flash of his aura stunned the crowd into shocked silence.

"You've all gotten to babble at me so shut it and I'll have my say and be done with it." Harry turned and looked at two 7th Year prefects. Valentine still looked like she wanted to spit nails but Rhodri looked very unhappy. "You can tell Professor McGonagall I waive my preparation time for a censure meeting. That way this meeting can act as one. Is that agreeable to you?"

Rhodri shrugged as Valentine nodded with an evil grin on her face. It was obvious which way the vote would go. Harry looked to Hermione and Neville as well as Colin and Matilda Toke since they were the new 5th Year prefects. "How about you four? You agree to this?"

While both Neville and Colin looked about as glum as Rhodri but they nodded in agreement. The looks on the girls' faces seem to show his bonding to Padma had not gone over well with the witches. Of course who knew what Hermione had told them?

Harry crossed his arms across his chest and stared at the assembled House. Quite a few had come hurriedly down from the

dorms. Harry doubted there were but a few missing out of the entire House. Harry waited till everyone had quieted down and were watching him.

"Okay, first off I'm not surprised at you all. Not at all. This is my 6th year and just like my 2nd and 4th years my oh so loyal housemates think poorly of me. Back in 2nd year most of the house thought I was the Heir of Slytherin just because I can speak with snakes. A trait, I'd like to add, is revered in some cultures...isn't that right Parvati? Funny how you never mentioned that back then. But then again speaking up would have gone against the 'accepted wisdom' of the day which had me being evil." Harry glared at the witch and dared her to contradict him. She just quailed under his gaze and hung her head.

"Then there was the Tri-Wizard Tournament. Most of you all, to include 'my best mate' all thought I cheated to get in. Dumbledore himself said I didn't but I guess back then the Headmaster's word wasn't good enough. Nope, you all thought I was in it for fame and glory. Funny how I already have that and I think I've been pretty consistent in showing how I'd trade it all to have just one day with my parents."

Harry turned to Seamus who was glaring at him with hate filled eyes. "Then there was last year. A lot of you guys all believed the Prophet about me. Didn't believe me about Voldemort returning or how bad things actually were. Oh you guys started to come around...only after that hag started to turn this school into a prison. Did you all forget how most of you only changed your mind when my story came out in print? Do I need to have another story printed in the Quibbler before any of you believe me this time? I mean it seems you all take as gospel what ever is printed in that rag of a Daily Prophet."

Harry raised his fist so that the scar message 'I will not tell lies' was clearly visible to those close enough to see it. "I mean I might as well be the Patron Saint of Truth here yet I speak and no one believes!" Harry pushed up his sleeve to show the scar from where Wormtail had taken his blood. "You think I slashed my own arm just for kicks to help lie about Voldemort's return?" Harry bared his other arm. "Less any of you forget I got this scar from the fangs of the basilisk I was fighting with the Sword of Gryffindor at the time. The very same sword I had to prove myself worthy of before I could pull it out of the

Sorting Hat! I wonder how many of you would be judge worthy enough to do the same?"

Harry covered his arms back up and began to pace. However he kept turning his head and making eye contact with as many people as he could. For all that he was trying to keep his anger down it was bleeding into his aura and the air in the room felt like air before a lightning storm. The room was now noticeably colder than it had been even with the fire blazing in the fire place.

"So now I'm a nutter again. Now I'm a murderer again. Now I'm a traitor to Gryffindor. Oh and I guess I'm a slaver now too? Well you can believe what you want because I'm not here to change your mind. Why? Because I don't care anymore. You all have proven again and again what the Ravenclaws say about our house: brave but stupid!" Harry scolded.

An ugly murmuring grew at this but Harry talked over it. "How else can we explain how you didn't believe Dumbledore in my 4th year but now on the slimmest of evidence I supposedly killed Smith? No auror has announced I am an official suspect and considering how Professor Moody was a Death Eater in disguise for the entire year should be a lesson of how things are rarely what they seem! A few portraits see something and now I'm public enemy number one?"

Harry looked over and sneered at Cormac, "As for me 'consorting' with Slytherins...well I don't see how a friendly chat with two girls whose family has been doing business with my House for generations is somehow evil. In addition since I recently found out I'm related to Daphne and Astoria Greengrass I think it quite understandable for an orphan like myself to want to get to know the relatives I didn't know I had. Not only are you folks proving bravery doesn't mean smart it also seems to show you don't listen well. The Sorting Hat, made by Godric Gryffindor himself, has told us how we need to unite as one and not squabble as four. I was making inroads towards that. If that means I'm a traitor then I suggest you ask the Sorting Hat its opinion on my actions."

Harry turned back so he could face Hermione who stood with her arms crossed and her body tight with tension. Her face was defiant but Harry could see uncertainty in her eyes. Harry's face, however, reminded quite a few of the how he looked when he had Ron down

on the floor after kicking him in the stones. Many shivered at that memory and wondered if Harry would explode in rage.

Harry seemed oblivious to the worried looks appearing on many of the faces around the room. He merely strode over to face Lavender and Parvati. "Lastly there is Padma. I don't know what you heard so here is the deal. I am having trouble with my aura and unfortunately this set off a rare condition where Padma's own aura got trapped with mine. If I hadn't bonded with her she would have been insane in a matter of days. I bonded to her with the full approval of her parents who I spoke to prior to the bonding. Did you think I did this hidden away in some closet? Her father and I did the bonding ritual together while her mother and Professor Flitwick watched! You all are making it sound like I snuck into the Ravenclaw dormitory and carried her off in the dead of night!"

Harry gestured to Neville, "Like I told Neville and Hermione, I also bonded with her because the only other way to cure her would be to bind her as a wife or consort. Both of these are more permanent bonds, bonds Padma was in no condition to agree to. Now when my aura stabilizes and our auras are no longer meshed, I can release the concubine bond. I did this to give her a choice. I'm sure Neville tried to tell you all this. It is obvious most of you didn't listen! So I guess Neville's word doesn't mean shitte to you any more than mine does. So much for the prestige and respect due to the Most Noble House of Longbottom! Congratulations Hermione, next time Draco mouths off you can point out how your word is taken over an ancient Pureblood's. I'm sure you're so proud."

There were quite a few shocked looks at this which told Harry how once again people had jumped to conclusions with only a smattering of the facts. Many looked at Neville like they had just noticed him there for the first time. This angered him even more. Did any of those looking shocked ever think for themselves?

"Beyond actually listening to Neville did any of you think to actually ask Padma about this or did you just take Hermione's word when it is obvious she has an axe to grind with me? Parvati, you are her twin, Did she tell you how she thanked me for giving her a choice most in your family have never had? Did you explain to everyone here how her being a concubine with an eventual choice is better than a lot of your cousins can expect back in India? Or have you been just hanging out here waiting for me to show so Lavender

could express your righteous indignation for you?" Harry said in a voice heavy with sarcasm.

Seeing Parvati look away, Harry yelled, "No you didn't talk to her and it is obvious none of you did! Once again you all just jump to conclusions and go with whatever crap gets shoveled your way." Harry looked at Seamus since Ron wasn't there to be glared at. "Perhaps no one took the trouble because Padma is only a 'wog' right? Not worthy of the trouble of asking her opinion since she's just a foreigner." At this Seamus face contorted in anger and only Dean's sudden grip on his arm kept him in place. Harry sneered at this and turned back towards the bulk of the room.

"None of you actually took the time to walk to the Ravenclaw tower to see what the truth might actually be! Since you are all woefully misinformed, let me make one thing perfectly clear: I bonded with her. I didn't bind her. You guys can see her as a bound concubine like she's shackled to me but I see us as bonded together. I am bound to her just as much as she is to me." Harry said.

"The hell you say, Potter!" Dean yelled out. "You can pretty it up all you want but she has to obey you! You can't just wish that away! You took away her choice!"

Harry surprised everyone by nodding. "You are right; I do have power over her but I'm not the one who set up the concubine bonds now did I? However since you bring it up did you blokes think because I was staring Snape down I couldn't hear your comments?" Harry turned and glared at Seamus who looked back defiantly. "Pretty sad saying I'm sort of slaver when I heard quite a few comments wondering if I would share Padma around! So girls, so many of you seem to have your knickers in a twist on Padma's behalf. But it wasn't I who almost immediately began to wonder if I was going to whore her out! Oh I heard all the comments and trust me I do know they weren't just from blokes in this room. However you can't share a dorm with some blokes for five years and not recognize voices. Isn't that right Seamus? Dean?"

Harry paused for a moment and again just looked around the room. "I've helped win the Quidditch cup, the House cup and literally bled for this House. Is that why you all are so quick to judge me? You want to knock me off some pedestal I never aspired to be on in the first place? Well since you all have accused me of disgracing the

name of Godric Gryffindor let me ask you something. Who here realized one of our own was missing and in danger when a troll got loose? Who then went to save that lost girl from the troll? Who was it who leaped into the Chamber of Secrets to help a fellow Gryffindor? Who made sure a little girl wouldn't die underwater when her sister couldn't save her? Who here has faced Voldemort three times since coming to school? A show of hands?" Harry raised his own hand. "Okay, I guess it is just me then."

Harry saw how most of the students started to look guilty at his words. This actually made him even angrier. Could they be any less like the brave lions they were supposed to be rather than the stupid sheep he saw in front of him? Harry bit back the anger surging through him. He took a deep breath before continuing. "You know Narcissa Black told me recently how typical it is for Gryffindors to hear about something they either don't like or don't understand and just react. Instead of trying to find out what is really going on, Gryffindors unite against it with righteous fervor. Nothing like a noble cause to get a Gryffindor's blood pumping! Tell me, Hermione, did Ms. Black happen to say anything like that to you?" Harry slurred the last word so it came out sounding more like 'spew' to further needle her.

Hermione face went white as many people looked at her and caught what Harry was getting at. Ginny's face, however, had an odd look on it. It was worshipful in a rather creepy way. Harry turned back to the 7th Year prefects. "Okay, I've said my piece. You can finish your meeting now. I'm leaving."

Rhodri nodded, "We'll send Neville to tell you how the censure vote came out Harry."

Harry shook his head, "I don't care Rhodri because the vote is a meaningless gesture and besides you won't be able to censure me anyway."

Neville obviously didn't like the undercurrent to Harry's words as he quickly asked, "What do you mean Harry? Why not?"

Harry turned back so he was facing the entire group, his wand suddenly in his hand. With a flick the red and gold of Gryffindor on his tie became the black and silver of House Black. "It won't matter Neville because of this moment I am no longer a member of

Gryffindor House. Most of you have never supported me so I see now reason to stay any longer. So I'm taking my leave of this den of mistrust and stupidity. You can inform Professor McGonagall I'm withdrawing from Gryffindor House as is my right as an emancipated lord."

The entire room seemed to have been struck dumb at Harry's words. Harry turned to Natalie MacDonald, "Well Natalie your job of chaser is safe since I won't be taking back my seeker spot from Ginny." He looked over to where Katie was standing and was sad to see her crying. He knew his actions were going to hurt the very people who still believe in him. "I'm sorry Katie I can't rejoin the team. Don't worry, this won't affect the team getting the new Nimbus 2001's which will be here in a few days."

Harry made a point of looking around the room as if to etch it in his memory. "Sad to leave since I have some good memories of times here. However school is just seven years out of our lives. Soon we'll be out in the world and all this crap about being a Gryffindor or a Slytherin won't matter. You might want to reflect about that tonight. Think about how most of you just angered one of the wealthiest people in magical England."

Harry turned back to Seamus, "Seamus, your dad works for Atlainagh Aontaithe right?"

The Irish-born looked wary, "So what if he does?"

Harry smirked, "Oh I just wondered what your dad is going to think when he hears you have seriously brassed off the guy who owns the company he works for."

A few of the more politically astute students let out a gasp as they realized that quite a few of them had family who worked for companies Harry now owned. Harry couldn't keep a cruel smile from forming.

"Yes once again brave Gryffindor leaps to the defense of innocents against evil and injustice. Never mind few of you actually thought to check your facts or think about the consequences of your actions or even if the 'innocent' in this case thought she needed saving! No wonder Gryffindors are so often just canon fodder to be used by anyone smart enough to wave a red flag in front of you all. Lions?

Hah! They need to change the House sign to a bull they way you all blindly charge around."

Harry turned and opened the portal. He looked back with his usual lop-sided grin, "In light of all the bullshit I heard tonight I think having a bull as Gryffindor's symbol would be quite appropriate considering the circumstances. Good night and farewell!"

The sound of the portal closing sounded almost like a gunshot in the silence that followed as many in the room looked at each other while asking themselves the same question.

What had they done?

XxXxX

A/N: I made a few changes to last chapter in regard to some of the Hermione scenes. She came across a lot harsher than I had intended. At the time she was angry at the situation and not Harry and the reviews showed how I didn't show this properly.

Atlainaiigh Aontaithe: Irish Gaelic for Atlantic United. Don't know what it does but it sounds cool. =)

House Censure: Yes, I know there is a similar scene in Lies I Lived, but sometimes certain situations lead to similar outcomes like how sharks and dolphins look similar because they both meet a similar goal.

Spells: Oh you know you like to geek about stuff like this! Admit it!

Pariei ignis = Wall of Fire (the actual spell)

Sidus Frigor = Star Burst (Frigor has a lot of different meanings)

Totus Nox = Total Darkness (no big surprise, right?)

Pilae inflammati = Fireball (Hermione's silent spell)

Acci Accipiter = A possible spell for conjuring hawks although one could also make a cast for Vocare Accipiter which would be summoning hawks. However as a long time D&D player summoning usually reflects actually calling of actual creatures to come whereas

conjuring them creates magical constructs which mimic the real article. So conjured hawks can be barbecued with impunity. If Hermione had summoned them, she'd have to wait for them to appear but Harry might not want to kill them.

Frangere Lata: Latin doesn't have a word for bludgeon so we'll just have to go with the Hulk's favorite verb. This is the wide area one which takes a lot more power than the standard Frangere Parva spell would

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – A COVEN IS BORN

McGONAGALL'S OFFICE, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 7th – EVENING

"Do any of you realize what you have done?" McGonagall raged at the prefects standing in front on her desk. She glared at her students who all, except for Hermione, seemed to be looking anywhere but at her. "Do any of you realize the damage you have caused? The shame you have brought upon the noble name of Gryffindor House by your reckless actions?"

"But Professor he..." Hermione started.

"SILENCE!" McGonagall roared. As Hermione gaped at her in surprise, McGonagall continued on icily, "He did nothing Ms. Granger. Do not try to pin this fiasco on Mr. Black! I have already reviewed the events of the day. While Mr. Black's actions as a student in Professor Snape's class were inexcusable, in light of the long animosity between the two I am thankful Mr. Black showed the restraint that he did. If you take into account Mr. Black's unstable magical state the restraint he showed is doubly impressive."

"Furthermore, Ms. Granger, it was obvious to me the main reason for this restraint was due to his desire to comfort Ms. Patil in her obvious distress. This distress was, I might add, something you caused by blurting out information which was not yours to give! This was compounded by the vulgar comments made by many of the wizards in the room, our own Mistert Finnegan and Thomas among them. Even in the face of a fight with Professor Snape which has been brewing since his first day at Hogwarts, Mr. Black held back. You, on the other hand, when needled once again by the same professor could not hold your tongue! Being brave does not mean fighting battles your opponent is maneuvering you into! You let him drag you onto ground of his choosing at a time where he could do the most damage! 'Brightest witch of her age' you have been called but you allowed Professor Snape to play you like a novice first year! In doing so you have not only damaged the reputation of our House but cruelly hurt an innocent girl in your petty desire to get back at Mr. Black." McGonagall said scathingly.

Hermione looked defiant which was the wrong thing to do in the face of McGonagall's anger. Seeing the stubborn look on the teen

caused a sanguine flush of anger on the elder witch's face. "Once again, Ms. Granger, your actions have been against the best interest of your fellow witches. Do you think for one moment I enjoyed having Mr. Black throw in my face the very cowardly actions of witches like yourself who allowed boys like the Weasley twins to prey on the likes of Ms Perks? Do you think I enjoyed being called to the carpet while he berated me in front of the other House heads to say nothing of the Headmaster?"

McGonagall took a deep breath and for a moment looked sad. "I had wanted to intervene but Professor Flitwick convinced me the witches of Hogwarts needed to learn how to deal with wizards like the Weasley twins. He rightfully pointed out we would not be able to protect witches once they left the school. Hogwarts would be a safer environment to hone the skills they would need to deal with such wizards. We teachers would not be there to help you after Hogwarts so coddling you all would teach you nothing. Professor Flitwick said to have faith in the witches under our charge to have the courage to do the right thing. Sadly you all failed miserably. I had expected far more from my 'brave' lions than the cowardly display of staying silent and hoping you wouldn't be the next target."

McGonagall turned to Valentine Gudgeon who was looking very pale. She had been known to be very chummy and accommodating with the Twins before their spectacular exit. "That failure goes double for you Ms. Gudgeon! I expect my 7th Year prefects to act as my eyes and ears in my House. I do not expect you to act for me! A vote to censure has proper rules and a time schedule associated with it and the most important rule is the Head of the House makes the decision whether such a meeting should take occur in the first place! There is a reason for this and you all proved it tonight by acting like immature teenagers!"

McGonagall looked at each of her prefects in turn. "If it wouldn't make matters worse I would pull all of your badges tonight! However justified it would be it would just inflame this disaster even more. One of the most famous wizards in England leaves his house. Did none of you think Mr. Black might take that option in the face of some of you whipping up his house-mates against him? Did none of you think what it would look like to outsiders when the story broke?"

McGonagall looked back to Hermione, "Ms. Granger I would have expected your dealings with Rita Skeeter would have taught you

how things can be twisted and distorted by the press. Here the Daily Prophet can factually print everything and all over England people will be shaking their heads at the actions of Gryffindor House!"

"But Professor, Harry..." Hermione attempted to say only to be ruthlessly cut off again.

"But nothing! Harry Potter has been a target of everything from hero worship to calls for him to be thrown into Azkaban! Through all of it this has been something done to him, as Harry Potter and not as a member of Gryffindor. While this was the case our House could weather the criticism stoically and reap the benefits of the praise when it came. Now? Now Gryffindor House is the news and what was said will probably get out. Think Ms. Granger! Do you believe the Daily Prophet will not be prying into what was said tonight? A few galleons in the right student's hands and all our dirty laundry will be aired for all to see. What if Mr. Black wants to twist the knife by being interviewed for another Quibbler article? You let your petty teenage jealousy blacken the name of your own house!" McGonagall said as her anger returned in full force.

"I will not have it! The six of you, as of now, are on probation. I do not care who said what or why. The six of you could not work together to prevent this travesty. You will be restricted to your duties as prefects. When not patrolling or taking part in other prefect duties, you will remain in Gryffindor Tower. You will only be allowed to go to the library during off periods during the day. You will not be allowed to take part in any club activity and while in Hogsmeade you will only be allowed to shop for school supplies and patrol as a prefect. I will decide how long this punishment will last. Do I make myself very clear?" McGonagall asked dangerously.

"Yes Professor!" the prefects all echoed together.

McGonagall glowered at them for awhile. "You will speak to no one of this and you will tell the students the same. If any media or other party wishes to speak on the issue you will refer them to me. There will also be no retaliation, mocking or other uncivilized conduct against Mr. Black. For all intents and purposes he does not exist any more. If any students of the likes of Mr. Finnegan even glare at Mr. Black you will find Professor Snape's detentions pale before what I can devise to punish you! As it is, you all will be doing a few detentions along with certain students I shall announce later."

"Detention?" Hermione squeaked.

"Yes, Ms. Granger, detention. It is what happens to students who break the rules." McGonagall said with heavy sarcasm. Everyone in the room knew Hermione had never been given a detention by a 'real' Professor since anything done by Umbridge was widely seen as not to count.

"Uhm, Professor...about not being able to go to clubs?" Neville said hesitantly.

"Yes Mr. Longbottom? McGonagall said crossly. She hadn't expected Neville to be the one to whine about not being able to go to the latest gobstone tournament or chess match.

"Well I know you said to steer clear of Har...Mr. Black but he is expecting some of us to help him teach the Defense Association. I know Professor Dumbledore seems to highly approve of this club. In addition we all got better scores on our OWLs because of it. If things go badly like you feel they might, the Gryffindors who go might not get the tutoring they deserve and thus our House will score lower than the rest." Neville said quietly.

McGonagall looked at Neville thoughtfully as she mulled this over. "Well said Mr. Longbottom. That is the type of thinking I expect out of my prefects. You are quite right about what could happen if you are not there. Very well since it is less of a club and more of extra tutoring I will allow it for those of you who had planned to go. Again I stress you need to watch your fellow Lions to ensure they act appropriately. I am also sure the likes of Draco Malfoy will work to tried to goad certain students in Mr. Black's presence in class and in the halls so you all need to be vigilant in preventing this."

McGonagall looked at the clock. "It is time for prefect patrols. You are dismissed. Ms. Granger, a word before you go." The other prefects quickly left with only Neville looking back worriedly at Hermione. The witch sat nervously at what further punishments McGonagall might have for her.

McGonagall stared at the younger witch before sighing, "When we last spoke, Ms. Granger, you vowed not to let me down. Sadly this vow did not even last two day. Disappointment is to poor a word to

describe what I'm feeling. I entrust my prefects with a great responsibility to guide and protect our House. In you I also entrusted a responsibility to magical Britain and you may have thrown it away in a girlish tantrum! From Ms. Weasley I might have expected this but not from you."

Hermione's already glum face fell even further. Her whole countenance was of defeat.

McGonagall saw this and snapped, "Look at you! Is this what it takes to defeat you? Is all a Death Eater need do is have one of their daughters catch Mr. Black's eye for you to fall to pieces? We are at war, Ms. Granger, and the enemy doesn't care about your puerile problems! Will you hesitate when the killing curse is being cast because Mr. Black is acting like a typical teenage male for a change and you have allowed him to break your heart?"

Hermione started to cry, "But Professor...he was with Millicent Bulstrode!"

McGonagall came around her desk and sat next to the crying teen. However instead of the grandmotherly caring hug Hermione might have thought was coming turned out to be a slap to her cheek!

"You mean he wasn't with you!" McGonagall hissed. "Do you think I am so old I do not remember what it was like to be your age? To look in the mirror and worry if you were pretty enough or to sit up nights and agonize why a certain boy never seemed to notice you? This has little to do with him! You are angry because he was with Ms. Bulstrode and not you!"

Hermione tried to rub the sting out of her cheek as she continue to cry, "But why wasn't he with me? After all I have done for him, how could he do this to me? Doesn't he love me? Why doesn't he love me?" Hermione cried out forlornly.

McGonagall's angry expression cracked and finally softened. She gathered the crying witch into her arms. "Hermione, you silly child, for all your intelligence you are making the same mistake witches year after year make. You think since Harry is having sexual relations he must love the person he is with? Foolish girl! Sex usually has nothing to do with love especially at your age. Harry must have explained to you by now the problems he is having with

his aura? I discussed this issue with Madam Pomfrey. She told me if he didn't have the aura minder he would be causing chaos in class. His own body is driving him to have sex and his aura is making him more desirable to other witches. Harry has always had a bevy of witches willing to throw themselves at him and now it is doubly so. The only real change is now Harry is willing to catch those witches. You are blaming yourself and him for something neither of you can control."

Hermione sniffled as she cried against McGonagall, "Oh Professor you didn't see the look on his face...he was so happy!"

McGonagall couldn't help but chuckle, "Oh my innocent child! Of course he looked happy! Do you think people do the stupid things they often do if sex was not one of the most pleasurable things in life? Plus you silly girl, sex among us Magicals is even more so since our auras interact so we feel a bit of what are partner feels. We become one in joy and pleasure. Later in life this is intensified by love."

McGonagall rocked the teen in her arms almost like a baby. "Oh Hermione, someday you will know what it feels like to bask in the arms of a wizard who loves you. You will feel what it is like when the pleasures of the flesh are in harmony with the love you bear for each other."

McGonagall continued to rock the teen who still wept over how life seemed so unfair to her. Thus it was she didn't hear McGonagall's final whisper. "May you never know the pain of losing that love and what it does to your heart and soul."

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LIBRARY, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 8th – EVENING

Harry looked up from his reading as he noticed two 7th year Gryffindors suddenly stop their whispered conversation on seeing him as they came around the stacks closest to where he was seated. He took note how they quickly looked away and even obviously changed direction upon seeing him. With a wry smile Harry went back to his reading about dueling customs.

The reaction from the Gryffindors was nice because it was very different from what Harry had gotten during the day from the rest of the student body. The morning's Herbology class had been a bit tense which had surprised Harry since the greenhouses were a place you had to pay attention. Sprout had too many odd plants you didn't want to forget could put you into the Infirmary for a day or two. Even with the roaming vines of the tentacula, Harry had noticed a lot of his class mates either giving him the stink eye or pointedly ignoring him.

Harry hadn't been surprised. He was sure the Ravens were upset over the issue with Padma and the Badgers might as well considering how many of them were Muggleborn or raised. This, of course, on top of the rumor that he had killed Smith. Harry was a bit hurt that Justin, his Herbology partner, seemed brassed off at him. Of course Justin as a Muggleborn probably hadn't heard enough about the magical world in general to realize what he'd most certainly heard about concubines wasn't the norm. Over the years Harry had noticed Justin was a bit prissy and prudish like Hermione and he had to wonder if it was because he came from a well-to-do family like Hermione did. Harry had resolved to pull Justin aside and explain this after the D.A. meeting coming up.

For all the glares or turned backs, it was better than Harry had expected. However what he didn't like was how much of this was directed at Padma as well. A lot of the girls seem to look at Padma like she was suddenly broken and Harry especially didn't like the looks some of the guys were giving her. From the back of the class Harry had watched her as she sat with her sister and Lavender. Padma seemed very tense in contrast with her sister who still seemed to be keeping quiet while Lavender seemed to go off in heated whispered rants from time to time.

Harry had noticed Parvati almost seemed to be channeling Daphne with Lavender filling in for Tracey Davies. He had asked Neville about it since he was the only one who had the guts to sit with him and Justin. Neville had just shrugged and said Parvati had been acting kind of weird ever since school started. Justin had agreed and commented how the famed Gryffindor Gossip Girl didn't seem on top of things like she'd had in the past.

Harry frowned and put down his book. He had too much on his mind to retain anything he was reading. Plus he was just avoiding some

reports he had to read back in his room. True to her claims, Narcissa had jumped into his affairs with a will. She simultaneously was working on setting up the Isis Foundation while trying to unravel Harry's affairs as head of three Houses. She'd already had compiled a great deal of info for him. As he put the book away Harry realized he should hire some people to help Narcissa due to the way she was going. He was sure there was a lot of scut-work involved and Narcissa had more important things to do than be the one doing it. He'd have to talk to her about it and maybe sound out Martin Creswell to see if he knew some likely candidates. Harry thought he might also ask Blaise since she might know some recent grads who could use the job as entry level internship. Harry was sure Narcissa was famous enough that many would be eager to learn from her.

After seeing a few more people give him the stink-eye, Harry realized he didn't want any surprises going back to his room. The last thing he needed was another Smith incident! So he went over to an alcove and after a quick wave of his wand and a muttered, "Non Observio!" Harry pulled out the Marauder's Map so he could avoid anyone he didn't want to be hassled by. Harry scanned the map and noticed Katie, Leanne, Cho, Gina and some other 7th years were in an unused classroom not far from the Maternity House where Sally was with Jacob. Harry smiled to himself; they must be playing darts. He thought he'd drop by and watch for a bit since he could use some cheering up.

However as he was about to wipe the map, Harry noticed something odd not far from the Gryffindor tower. In one of the supply rooms Lavender was in the middle of the room with five boys whose names he vaguely recognized arrayed in a semi-circle in front of her. They were not moving by Lavender's icon wiggled a bit in a random way. Even more odd was in the adjacent room there were rows of storage closets (which were slightly larger than the average broom closet) of which Parvati was in one of them. She looked to be leaning against the wall. What made this even odder was Dean Thomas was in the next closet over also leaning against the wall just opposite of Parvati. Harry also saw Seamus and two Gryffindor 4th years grouped just outside the room.

Harry looked at the map and tried to figure out what was going on when he remembered a night when he had overheard Ron kidding Seamus about staying out late most nights. Ron had kidded Seamus about being addicted to Glory. At the time Harry had just assumed

Ron was teasing Seamus about fancying Gloria Stebbins from Ravenclaw who was two years ahead of them. Looking at the map Harry realized now what Ron had meant: he had been talking about a glory hole. It was pretty obvious now why Parvati and Dean were leaning so close to the wall and while the others were hanging around; they were merely waiting their turn. Harry looked back over to where Lavender was shown but he couldn't tell what she was actually doing.

Harry shook his head. While Parvati was much more vivacious than Padma, he couldn't see her sucking off anonymous blokes! Plus he doubted Lavender was just standing up lecturing the other boys on some topic. So what was going on? Was Parvati's weird behavior related to what she was doing? More importantly was whether or not she was doing it willingly.

Harry wiped the map and was about to head down to the storage room before he stopped himself. Did he really need to go running down to 'save' Parvati when he had no idea what was going on? His own comments to the Gryffindors came back to him. One, he had no idea what was going on and two it really wasn't his business. Maybe Parvati was doing it for the kink or maybe sucking for sickles. It wasn't his place to go running down to put a stop to it. Harry sighed; he'd talk to Padma and perhaps take action if it was warranted. For the time being, however, he resolved to put it out of his mind. He had enough things on his plate as it was.

Harry hurried down to where he had seen Katie hanging out, presumably playing darts. He hoped the players wouldn't freak out when he showed up. From what he had seen on the map it was a mixed bag of 7th years from different Houses. At the very least he knew Katie and Gina from Slytherin would be glad to see him. Cho would as well even though they still were a bit embarrassed around each other.

Harry managed to get to the room without being seen by anyone other than the Fat Friar who was gliding down a corridor talking with the Grey Lady. Harry could hear laughter through the door before he knocked and then let himself in. As luck would have it, Katie saw him first. Her face lit up, "Hey Harry! What brings you by?"

Every head in the room turned toward him. Luckily most of the 7th years just looked curious. Harry smiled as he walked over to Katie,

"Well I kind of was getting down with everyone either ignoring me or giving me the stink-eye when I saw you guys playing here. I thought watching you folks might be fun and good for a laugh."

Cho looked at him curiously, "How did you 'see' us playing here Harry?"

Harry smirked, "Ah Cho that is my little secret. Let us just say there is a reason the Sorting Hat wanted to put me in Slytherin." Harry chuckled at the surprised looks his comment caused. Harry felt it was better to distract them with this personal tidbit to cover the gaffe of obliquely mentioning the Marauder's Map.

Katie laughed, "So you've been spying on us? Should we girls start wearing bathing suits to the showers?"

"Of course I'm spying on you, Katie; I'm desperate for your Top Secret dart tactics!" Harry joked. "As for the showers even if I had the ability, I'm not stupid enough to try. The Dark Lord I can handle. All the girls of Hogwarts after my blood? No thanks!"

The girls in the room all chuckled at this before picking up where they had left off. Harry sat on a couch which had seen better days with Katie as he watched the game-play. There were two teams made up of Gryffindor/Hufflepuff versus Slytherin/Ravenclaw. It all seemed very playful and lacking in a lot of intra-house tension Harry had normally seen.

Harry asked Katie about this after one of her rounds up where she had almost scored a bull's-eye. Katie shrugged at the question, "Well I guess by 7th year with all the stress of getting ready for our NEWTs we just don't have the energy to give a crap about hating the other houses. I mean a lot of stuff which seemed so important when we first showed up here just isn't that big of a deal anymore. I guess it's kind of like how you said Hogwarts is only seven years of our lives. Next year it won't matter what house we were in."

Harry nodded at this. He was glad some people at least weren't going to let their Hogwarts house affiliation affect their opinions forever.

Katie took a swig of butterbeer and nodded toward Gina who was laughing with three other 7th year Slytherins. "Besides all the

Slytherin's here are either Muggleborns, half-bloods or from neutral houses so they get along better with us than their own house." She let out a healthy belch and glared at Harry who was trying not to laugh.

"Yeah you better not laugh, buster! It's bad enough you abandoned me and saddled me with MacLaggen!" Katie said with a fake growl.

Harry shook his head, "Hey don't blame me for Ron's problems. I didn't ask any of them to follow me to London. Plus I would have thought even Ron knew better than let out potentially dangerous creature out in the middle of a magical firefight. At least Ginny is pretty good as a seeker. It isn't like you're saddled with someone like Malfoy. Besides I didn't want to leave Gryffindor...they just didn't want me. I knew leaving was going to hurt the very ones who stood up for me and I'm sorry about that."

Katie glared at him for a second before smiling and then surprised him by snuggling against him a bit. Harry could tell she'd already had a few drinks and he was suspicious of the 'punch' they had out on a nearby table. Since every 7th year was an adult the rules about alcohol for them were usually pretty lax as long as they showed up sober for class. While surprising, Harry wasn't going to complain as Katie was soft and smelled wonderful. Of course Harry had to squirm a bit to relieve some of the tension as he found himself getting an erection.

"So Harry is that a wand in your pocket or are you just happy to see me?" Katie whispered into his ear mischievously. Harry groaned at this and quickly adjusted himself while Katie giggled at him.

"Hey Harry! You can ring the 'Bell' later! Shake a leg Katie; you're up!" Leanne called out. Harry couldn't help but blush at the laughter directed his way.

Harry watched appreciatively as Katie swung her hips seductively as she went up to take her turn. Even if she was a bit pissed, her aim was still as sharp as ever. She scored another high point shot and then bowed to the booing Snakes and Ravens.

Harry turned at a playful punch into his shoulder. He looked up to see Gina smiling down at him. "Harry you need to work harder at

distracting her for us! Now that you're not a Lion anymore I thought you might help us out a bit more!"

Before Harry could reply Katie bounced over and planted a sloppy kiss on his lips. "He's not distracting me; he's encouraging me!" Katie playfully tousled his hair, "Aren't you, my little cheering section?"

Gina looked down at the bulge in Harry's trousers. "Little isn't how I'd describe your cheering section!" Both girls laughed at Harry's blush got even redder. "Well Katie, I guess there is the answer all the Death Eater's have been looking for. Try to kill the great Harry Potter with spells and dark magic? No way! Throw him in with a room filled with older women and he goes straight to pieces!"

"But what a way to go," Harry blurted out. He hadn't realized how his aura wasn't a one-way street and will so many slightly pissed girls in close quarters just meant he was getting a lot of emotions reflected back at him. Harry also realized the fact Katie was practically on his lap meant she was getting a full dose of his aura regardless of his defuser being on. This meant he might be in for an even more embarrassing situation than being caught with a chubby!

Harry figured the best way to throw some water on the fire was bring up a topic he really didn't want to but it was better than letting things get out of hand. This was rapidly happening as Katie had started to rub his crotch while Gina smiled as if she was just waiting her turn. Harry also noticed Cho watching as Katie caressed him.

"Uhm...so Gina...I'm pleasantly surprised no one is giving me any crap about me having to bind Padma Patil. So far I've noticed a lot of Muggleborns haven't taken it well since it seems all they've heard about concubines is all the crap they are put through here in England." Harry tried to say conversationally while desperately ignoring Katie rubbing his cock through his trousers.

"I think it was sweet of you," Katie said before Gina could answer. "Of course you did sort of warn me which was very nice of you or otherwise I probably would have been blown away like everyone else. Who said chivalry is dead? Not with Hero Harry around that is for sure!" Katie kissed him again and then went to nuzzling his ear.

Gina rolled her eyes, "I don't know Harry, most of us here tend to be types who don't jump to conclusions. It is also like Katie said; we all have enough on our plates with our studies than worry about the latest disaster you're involved in. Personally I think when all those Nimbus 2001 brooms show up for the other teams the whole incident will be forgotten. If there is one thing you can depend on here at Hogwarts is almost everyone is mad for Quidditch."

Cho came over and sat down. At first Harry was worried she'd start rubbing his crotch along with Katie who had a happy (if slightly euphoric) look on her face. However Cho leaned in so she could whisper in his ear. "Harry, you may want to check on Padma. She was getting a lot of crap the other night...worse than Lovegood ever got. Even with Flitwick assuring us everything was fine and how her parents agreed to it...well a lot of the guys were making some crass comments about what you might do to her. Worse a lot of them are still hoping you'll lend her out."

Harry stiffened at this and even Katie stopped rubbing Harry's crotch with sudden look of anger. "What the fuck? I've known Harry since practically his first day here and he's the last wizard who would do such a thing! You wouldn't believe how shy and bashful he...well...okay Cho you probably know." Harry rolled his eyes at the smirk on Cho's face at Katie's words.

"Come on Katie, I was a basket-case last year so I think Harry showed a lot of restraint considering I would have shagged him simply to get over the pain of Cedric's death. I'm really glad he didn't. I can't think of too many blokes who wouldn't have jumped at the chance to take advantage of me." Cho said softly.

Regardless of her words, Harry could see the sadness in him and a bit of his old crush resurfaced. He didn't want to see her sad even if they weren't dating anymore. "Hey Cho, it wasn't just about you. With my magical core bound I was barely able to have a crush on you. The fact that I did should tell you how attractive you are. I'm sure if I'd been in my right mind I would have totally taken advantage of a beautiful witch throwing herself at me!"

Katie gave Harry another sloppy kiss although this one ended up mostly on his neck, "That's my Harry! Always going the distance to make you feel wanted!" While Gina and Cho giggled at this, Harry could see Cho had been touched by his words even if he had said

them in a joking way. Unfortunately the look in Cho's eyes had changed from sadness to the same sort of predatory look that Gina had. Harry was starting to worry the three of them would start snogging him right in front of everyone.

Rescue came to Harry from an unlikely source. The door into the room opened and Lucinda Urquhart stuck her head in, "Curfew and prefect patrols in fifteen minutes! You wanted me to remind you all! Consider yourself reminded!" The room erupted in grumbles, moans and boos. Both Gina and Cho grimaced and got up. Katie didn't seem to care curfew was rapidly approaching and continued to snuggle against Harry.

Leanne came over with the darts she and Katie had been using. She smiled down at her Gryffindor friend, "Hey Katie, you either need to get a room or shake a leg. Curfew is in a few minutes."

"Harry has a nice room I bet!" Katie said into Harry's long hair as she continued to nuzzle him.

Leanne rolled her eyes and grinned, "Hey Harry, can you make sure this Flying Fox makes it back to her tower? She does have Quidditch practice tomorrow." Seeing Harry's nod, Leanne joined the rest of the group leaving the room.

As Harry turned back towards Katie, she quickly began to kiss him. Harry loved the feeling of her soft lips on his own but he knew Leanne was right; she was the Quidditch captain and she needed to get some sleep. So sadly he gently broke the kiss, "Come on Sunshine we need to get you back to the tower."

Katie's face lit up in a wide smile at the nickname Oliver Wood had given her because of her hair. Harry had inadvertently called her that once as she had wanked him off and she had like it and so it became a personal thing between them. She hadn't heard Harry call her that since the night she first successfully cast her greyhound Patronus.

"I don't wanna go!" Katie pouted. "I'm perfectly comfy right here!"

Harry smiled at how cute she was being. "Come on Katie, you're pissed and I'm in enough trouble with the Gryffindor Quidditch team

without causing you to miss tomorrow's practice. Up and at 'em, Sunshine!" Harry stood and half drug Katie up with him.

"When did you (burp) become the responsible adult here?" Katie asked as Harry tried to get her to walk to the door. It was becoming obvious that Katie had drunk more than just a few and they were finally catching up to her.

Cho was waiting there, holding the door open for them. "You going to be able to manage, Harry?" she asked with a smile.

"Yeah, though I think I'm just going to take her to the Maternity house. It's a lot closer and there is plenty of room. Sally can let me in and she'll make sure Katie is taken care of. It'll be easier since I know we won't be able to make it back to the Gryffindor Tower before curfew."

"Why not take her to your suite? Isn't it closer?" Cho asked as Harry guided the protesting Lion out the door.

"Yeah! I wanna see the Potter Palace!" Katie grumped. She struggled against Harry's attempt to move her down the corridor.

"Don't make me stun you, Sunshine! I'm not on the Quidditch team anymore so don't think I won't." Harry joked. He looked at Cho who seemed pretty amused by the whole show, "While I don't have a problem with her bunking in my spare room I'm betting it would get out and then she'd get sucked into all the rumors and crap. Besides I'm trying to keep my spare room open in case Padma wants to use it."

"S'okay! I can sleep in your bed! It'll be fun!" Katie giggled as she reached down and gave Harry's crotch a playful squeeze.

"Katie, Harry's putting you to bed. He's not taking you for a snog and shag." Cho said with a giggle. The look on Harry's face was priceless as he tried to shepherd Katie down the corridor and avoid being groped at the same time.

"You're just saying that cuz you just want to steal him! I'm onto your sneaky Ravenclaw schemes!" Katie said as she wagged a finger accusatively at Cho. "Lil'Harry here is mine! We're Quidditch fuck

buddies so get your own! Aren't you shabangin' Corner anyway? He's got a nice bum!"

Harry was worried that Cho would get angry over this outburst since he couldn't tell if Katie was joking or serious. Cho, however, just laughed. "No I broke it off with Michael. I'm not into Weasley's sloppy seconds. You're right about one thing; he's got a nice bum." Cho looked down with a dreamy smile and suddenly began to grope Harry's arse. "Not as good as the one Harry has here though."

Katie smirked, "Isn't it fantastic? You should see his package! Just the right size and he doesn't smell or taste like he only washes every fortnight or so like most blokes." Katie suddenly pushed against Harry and thus wedged him between her and the corridor wall. Her right hand joined Cho's in caressing his bum while she continued to massage his crotch with her left hand.

Harry was torn. The intelligent part of him was screaming at him to get going. If it was not curfew already it would be soon. Even as an adult, he could still get detention for breaking curfew. While Cho was a prefect, she'd get in trouble if a teacher or Filch showed up to find her fondling his arse to say nothing of the talking to McGonagall would probably lay into Katie with. However Harry's intelligent part was rapidly being overwhelmed by the fact two of his long time fantasy girls were on the verge of sexually molesting him. The fact they were about to do it in a open corridor seemed less and less bothersome as both witches not only caressed him but had started to nuzzle him as well. Harry couldn't help but imagine an angel representing his brain and a devil representing his libido arguing heatedly about what to do on his shoulders.

Between his brain and his libido a compromised was reached. "Katie...Cho...come on. There is a broom closet right over there. We can't be caught like this!" Harry huskily said as Katie was kissing his neck as Cho was nuzzling his hair and seemed to be drinking in the smell of him.

"Oh goody! Nothin' better than Hogwarts broom closets sex!" Katie giggled as she quickly hustled Harry towards the closet door.

"Right! As a prefect I'm just making sure the corridors are clear! Can't have any 'inappropriate behavior distracting students from

their studies' and all that rot!" Cho said with a fair impression of McGonagall.

Harry was surprised, however, to find the broom closet door locked. With a curse he fumbled with his wand as both Katie and Cho returned to feeling him up. Harry continued to curse when his Alohomora didn't work.

Katie spun him around and pushed his back against the door. "Looks like we're not the only once ones doin' the dirty deed tonight! I guess they'll get an added bonus show tonight!" She then proceeded to fumble with Harry's trousers. Before Harry could protest, Cho leaned in and started to snog him fiercely. Katie soon proved, pissed or not, her chaser hands were unaffected by the alcohol as she quickly had Harry's trousers down around his ankles as she began to slowly wank him off. Katie's other hand quickly took Harry's left hand and put it on her breast.

Cho, not to be outdone, took his other hand and guided it under her skirt. Harry tried to say something but Cho stopped this with a finger to his lips. Cho sexily licked her own lips as she started to move her hips as she guided his hand into her moist knickers. For a second that imaginary angel on Harry's shoulder protested before the devil booted him off. The look of lust on Cho's face was something he'd fantasized about since 4th year and he just couldn't resist it. Cho gave a moan as his fingers began to caress her sex. After a breathy, "Oh Harry!" when he found her clit, Cho went back to kissing him passionately.

Harry couldn't believe this was happening! Sure he had been living any red-blooded teenage males' fantasy earlier with shagging an older woman, getting a semi-public blowjob as well as an orgy with three hot witches. Somehow all of that seemed less erotic than what was happening to him now. Katie had started to ride his leg as she continued to caress him. Her hand around his penis moved with a familiar rhythm which brought back memories of good times. She nuzzled into the crook of her neck and whispered dirty suggestions and comments. Cho seem determined to make up for lost time with him and was kissing him like no witch ever had. Her need seemed to be a tangible thing.

The trio quickly fell into a rhythm filled with moans, sighs and a lot of hip thrusting. Harry had switched from playing with Katie's breasts to

fondling her arse while she dry-humped against his leg. While the angle was awkward, Harry reveled in the hotness of Cho's sex. Luckily after a bit they found it was easier for Harry to simply let Cho grind against his hand.

Harry's mind was on fire. When Su Li had been 'infected' with Padma's aura, the orgy which followed was driven by that aura induced need. The four of them had licked, fucked and sucked with a driven sort of dementia. It almost hadn't seemed real. What Harry was feeling now was so different but no less powerful. The two witches who were grinding against him obviously had harbored strong feelings for him as Harry did for them. These feelings seem to interact between their three auras. It lent a special feeling to the sex Harry hadn't really felt except a bit with Luna and Lilith.

This feeling of course had a predictable affect on Harry. Very rapidly he was moaning into Cho's mouth before he broke away to gasp, "Oh Katie...I'm going to cum!" Katie instantly dropped to her knees and took Harry into her mouth just as he began to buck and shoot. As Harry moaned in ecstasy, Cho gave out a near shout of amazement and lust as Harry's aura seemed to dive directly to her clit and send an orgasmic pulse of pure lust and pleasure throughout her body. If she hadn't already been leaning against Harry he was sure she would have collapsed.

Katie managed to continue drinking in Harry's seed as the same feelings which had ripped through Cho went through her as well. Even as the alcohol and orgasmic feelings mixed, a part of Katie was amazed at how different Harry's cum tasted. His spunk had never been bitter or nasty like some of the blokes she'd been with. Now, however, not only was it delicious but it was hot in her mouth! It seemed so unreal! Even after living in the magical world for the last seven years, Katie still felt as if things like this were only possible in stories...or badly written romances or porn.

The three teens continued to moan and gasp as they came down from their sexual high. None of them heard similar moans and gasps coming from behind the door Harry was pressed against. Cho had wrapped her arms around Harry for support and was nibbling his ear as she mouthed barely intelligible words of praise. Katie, however, wasn't ready to stop and continued to tease and suck Harry's cock which was still semi-hard. Harry knew he should stop this before

they got caught but found he could do little else but lean against the door and enjoy the moment.

Cho seemed to perk up a bit at the wet sounds Katie was making in her desire to get Harry hard again. She dropped to her knees next to Katie, "You need to share you greedy bitch!"

Katie pulled back and smiled, "I was here first! Finders keepers!" Both girls then began to lick his shaft. The sight of it was just as erotic as it had been back at Jorkin's cape shop when Lilith's co-workers had jumped him after the two had shagged. However Katie and Cho were far prettier than those witches had been. He barely had to use his metamorphagus skills to harden his cock due to their dueling tongues. It helped that it seemed the girls were snogging each other while his dick just happened to be in the way.

Finally Cho manage to beat Katie to the punch and swallowed him whole. Katie watched as Cho began to happily bob up and down over his penis with a lusty look on her face. She looked up to see Harry watching them. With a smile she stood back up and went back to humping his leg as she took him in a two-armed hug.

"Like what you see Harry?" Katie whispered into her ear. "Did you like seeing us fight over you?"

Harry moaned a bit as Cho licked a sensitive spot, "Of course I do Katie! Two of my fantasy girls at once? I'd have to be half dead not to enjoy this, Sunshine!"

Once again Katie beamed at Harry's use of her nickname. She began to kiss him passionately while Harry's hands quickly found their way under her sweater and began to caress her breasts. Once again the trio found a rhythm as they bent to the task of pleasuring each other. The feelings left over from Harry's 'auragasm' had both witches still afire with feeling so it wasn't long before Katie moaned deeply in orgasm as she ground hard against Harry's leg. Cho wasn't far behind her as the fingers she had in her knickers brought herself off as well.

The sight and sounds of both girls pleasurable end wasn't making it any easier on Harry. Between the velvet softness of Cho's tongue to the familiar touch of Katie's body kept his blood racing. As much as he didn't want the moment to end (even while being worried about

being discovered) he couldn't help but feel the familiar feeling in his balls that told him it would be over far too soon. Both Katie and Cho could feel it as this sense bled into his aura. The witches redoubled their sensual actions as they eagerly awaited another of Harry's wonderful orgasms they would share together.

When it came, however, all three were startled by a fourth cry of surprised pleasure. Harry could barely keep his eyes opened as he shot a hot torrent of his seed into Cho's mouth. Thus he could barely make out Gina Walker as she slumped against the corridor wall as the surprise orgasm shook her to her core. Katie gave a strangled cry of pleasure and almost fell to the floor as well if Harry hadn't been able to grab her in time.

"Gina...wha...what are you doing here?" Harry finally was able to mumble.

Gina looked dazed for a moment before answering with a silly grin of happiness on her face, "Well I guess I don't need to ask what you're doing here. Oh my God Harry...that was incredible! If I knew you could do that I wouldn't have let you leave that room!"

"He's mine!" Katie slurred as she hugged Harry tightly. "I saw him first!"

"Yeah and I was his first date so I saw him...uh...well I got dibs too!" Cho said a bit drunkenly.

Gina looked like she was going to argue for a bit before she shook her head to clear it. She then took her wand out and cast a spell on her crotch. Harry could hear her mumble something about never thinking she would need to do this on knickers she was still wearing.

"Look girls I'm not here to debate who 'owns' Harry here. I'm here because there is a problem and Harry is needed elsewhere." Gina said as she tried to pull herself together.

Harry gently disentangled himself from Katie. As he did so, Cho gave his rapidly shrinking penis a last kiss before using her wand to clean the three of them up.

Harry pulled his trousers up and looked worriedly at Gina, "What's the problem? Can't I go a day without a disaster happening?"

Gina shook her head, "Well this disaster is something I'm sure you won't be surprised about. I was starting my patrol when I found Padma Patil sobbing against your suite door. The portrait was beside herself because your last instructions didn't allow for Patil to enter if there was no one in the room."

"Shitte! You're right!" Harry cursed. He really needed to be more aware of how he managed who could come and go into his room. Harry reached down and helped Cho to her feet. He motioned for her to take Katie's other arm.

Katie scowled, "I can walk unaided. I was mostly just playing before. Let's go." She grabbed Harry's arm as they followed Gina.

Cho yelped, "Hey wait for me!" The Asian witch hurried after them. She was pretty sure the night was shot for more sex but she wasn't going to let Katie hog Harry all to herself if there was even a chance of more hot Harry action!

OoOoO

"Are they gone?" A voice said in the darkness

The door creaked a bit as it opened letting some light into the darkened broom closet. "Yeah. It looks like they took off pretty fast."

"I can't believe that just happened! In fact I'm not sure what just happened!" The first voice said. "My pussy is just soaked! Bloody Hell; it's running down my leg!"

"Well I'd like to think I had something to do with that before the show started," said the second voice with a hint of teasing reproach.

"Of course you did!" For a moment the darkness was filled with the sounds of light kissing. "I'm just saying that was the most amazing thing I've ever felt. No offense!"

"No offense taken; I was just teasing. I know what you mean. I had heard rumors there was something up with Harry. I don't know why but his magical aura seems out of control. Maybe that's why he was stuck up in the tower at the beginning of term. I must say I could feel it the other day when I saw him last."

"I don't know. If that was the reason then wouldn't Dumbledore only let him out if he had it under control? It doesn't seem like he had it under control tonight! You should have seen it last night. While he was telling off our House I swear the room temperature fell about 18 degrees!"

"Hmmm...I heard that happened in the DADA classroom as well. Quite a few people mentioned it got so cold around Harry that you could see his and Professor Snape's breath while they faced off!"

For a moment the broom closet was quiet before a giggle finally broke the silence. "I'm so horny right now. I can't believe it! I mean I already had a good orgasm with you and then two more of those monster ones. My pussy still seems on fire!"

This brought about a laugh and a rustle of movement. "I think I know the cure for that!" Soon the room was filled with wet, sticky sounds as well as happy moans of pleasure.

"Oh Merlin you do that so well! I hope you don't mind...but I so want to fuck Harry Potter till I can't move for a week!"

"You and me both! I think I may have a way to make that happen!" came the reply. "Oh yes all it will take is a bit of cunning! Luckily I've got that in spades!"

OoOoO

Harry's heart dropped in his chest as he saw Padma sobbing against his door. He could hear Isla speaking in soothing tones to little affect. Harry grimaced; he couldn't help but think how much Padma sounded like Sally had before he had rescued her.

Padma's face lit up when she saw Harry. If she was surprised to see Katie and Cho with him she didn't show it. She quickly threw herself into Harry's arms. Before he could speak she was began to sob again.

Harry realized this probably wasn't the best time to ask what was wrong and just stroked her hair. He did feel guilty in how he probably smelled of sex.

While Katie looked sad, Cho reach over and rubbed Padma's back. "It was Eddie and his bunch of jolly bastards wasn't it?" She asked gently.

Padma sniffled and nodded and then just sort of sagged against Harry.

"Eddie? Eddie Carmichael?" Katie asked.

Cho nodded. "Yes. God's gift to this earth and an intellect above all others if you listened to him. He's got a whole bunch of cronies who follow him like Lockhart's fan-girls did. Beyond being a prig, a bore and a pompous arse, he's also a bigot. He and people like him in Ravenclaw are why Su Li, Padma and me are usually treated like dirt."

"You're just wogs, right?" Harry said sadly.

Cho nodded, "That and we're simply foreigners. It doesn't matter I was born here in England. The rest of my family was born back in China. So to them I'm just a second-class citizen who should either keep to my own 'kind' or feel lucky if someone like you deigns to 'allow' me to be their concubine."

"I'm sure they expect you to spread your legs for their mighty British peckers to boot I'll bet!" Katie said disgustedly.

"All to true I am afraid." Cho said. She nodded towards Gina, "Ravenclaw differs in our blood issues. While she might get some flack in Slytherin, Padma would be revered since her blood line is pure going back a long, long time. In Ravenclaw? She's a non-white and so it doesn't matter how 'pure' her blood is. The color of her skin is enough for them to look down on her...or me."

"They keep going on about now that I'm a concubine I'll finally learn my place. They keep going on about how as soon as Harry learns his 'place' in society he'll be lending me out at social functions to all his Wizengamot buddies." Padma choked out. "I know he won't do that but they won't stop talking about it and leering at me. None of the other witches say a thing! If anything they look at me like they hate me because I'm taking attention away from them."

"Wives always hate the mistress," Harry said. All of the 7th years looked at him in surprise so he elaborated. "I don't know much about magical England but back in the Victorian era you had all sorts of arranged marriages for money, power or status. So there wasn't a lot of love and so lots of the blokes would have mistresses. It was with them they had the hot sex and maybe love. I'm sure lots of the Ravenclaw witches see people like Padma, Su Li and you Cho as the same sort of threat. From what I've seen so far things seems similar. Get married and have kids and be seen as an upstanding pillar of community while secretly screwing around. Lilith told me she saw it all the time in Diagon Alley. Luna herself has...well let's just say she's seen it as well."

Gina reached out and put her arm on Harry's shoulder. "I hate to push here but you really need to get into your room. Cho, you've had your fun but you have patrol duties as well."

Harry nodded, "Gina, could you take Katie to the Maternity House? She can sleep there since it would be better than having you escort her all the way back to Gryffindor Tower."

"No. I'm staying here with you, Harry." Katie said. Her tone showed she wasn't going to take no for an answer.

Harry sighed, "Katie, I told you I don't want more rumors to start and I need the other bedroom for Padma here."

Katie shook her head. "You don't understand Harry. I'm going to be sleeping in the spare bedroom. Padma here is going to be sleeping with you."

Harry hugged Padma protectively. "Katie! I am not going to sleep with her! What sort of bastard do you think I am?"

Katie sighed, "Harry don't be an arse. I said Padma was going to sleep with you. I didn't say you were going to have sex with her. Padma needs some comfort and I'm telling you the last thing she needs is to be alone right now. I think she needs your arms around her tonight. If that gets too much then she can come sleep with me. Either way she isn't alone."

"She's right Harry," Cho said approvingly. "You blokes might want to tough shitte like this out but we gals often just need a hug and some

warmth to make it all better. She is your concubine; doesn't she deserve it?"

Harry looked unsure.

"It's okay Harry," Padma whispered. "Katie's right. I don't want to sleep alone. Why don't we all just sleep together?" Suddenly she smirked, "I mean it smells like you already had some good times tonight so you should be ready for some rest, right?"

Gina laughed at how the trio all blushed at Padma's words. "Okay you three, in you go. Lord Black just suck it up and do what Katie says. You need to stop worrying about rumors. They're going to happen whether you like it or not. You probably weren't thinking about it but you do know there were six portraits that could see your little sex show tonight, right? Trust me; some mangled form of tonight will get out. It's just the way Hogwarts is."

Harry looked down into Padma's soft brown eyes, "Are you sure about this?"

Padma smiled weakly, "No but if I can't trust you not to take advantage of me I may as well find out sooner rather than later. Besides, I'm sure Luna would feed you to the nargles if you hurt me."

Harry laughed, "You got that one right." Harry turned to Gina, "Thanks for your help Gina. I owe you one."

Gina reached down and rubbed Harry's crotch, "Thank you. That was the most amazing orgasm I've ever had. I might just want another one where I'm a bit more involved though. That and not standing up!" Gina leaned in and gave Harry a long kiss. "Come on Cho; let's go do our prefect thing."

Cho kissed Harry as well. "Thank you for tonight Harry. Even if we never do anything even remotely like that again I will treasure the memory of it forever."

"If you sold a pensieve copy of it I'm betting you could make some pretty good treasure out of it!" Katie joked.

Harry groaned at this while secretly agreeing with her. "I'm glad we had tonight, Cho. Maybe we can have some other times together. I'm not looking for a relationship or anything so if you're okay with some no-string attached sex, I'm game."

Cho gave a sultry smile, "No-string attached sex sounds okay by me!"

Katie wagged her finger, "Yeah but you can only have sex with Harry if you beat Gryffindor in Quidditch!" Both Harry and Padma laughed at this and the look on Cho's face. "What? I'm just trying to protect an ex-teammate's virtue!" Katie said with an evil grin.

From down the corridor Gina's voice rang out, "BED! Don't make me come back there!"

"Good night, Cho" Harry said and kissed her good-bye. He couldn't help but notice as she walked away how her pert arse was still as fine if not better than it had been last year.

"I hate to ask again, Padma, but are you sure about this?" Harry asked as he gestured for Isla to open the door.

Padma nodded. "I think so. Could you have one of your elves get my things? I don't think I can ever go back to the Ravenclaw dorms. I'm not sure if I want to be here with you or maybe sleep in the Maternity House. Nothing against you but it occurred to me the other day Sally must be awfully lonely all by herself."

"That's a good idea, Harry. That frees up your spare bedroom for people to crash in after the super parties we need to have here!" Katie said in wonder as she took in the opulence of the suite.

"Let me guess, you'll want the next dart meeting to be in here, right?" Harry asked.

"Hey, why not? You have the room, you have your own bathroom and you won't have to shag against some broom closet after curfew!" Katie said with an evil grin.

"About that, Harry," Padma whispered. "You and Katie might want to take a shower before you come to bed. You smell like...like...oh I

don't know, like you've gone through about 4 pages of the Kama Sutra."

Harry grinned sheepishly. "Okay, but I warn you, you might want to hang out here while my elves get your stuff. If I know Sunshine here things are going to get dirty before we can get clean again!"

Katie grinned like a kneazle who just ate the fwooper.

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LORD BLACK'S SUITE, HOGWARTS – OCTOBER 9th – LATE AFTERNOON

"Wow," Susan said finally breaking the silence.

"Is there a word which doubles the meaning of wow?" Sally asked with a rather dumbfounded look on her face.

"I'm sure we could break out a thesaurus and we still wouldn't find the right word," Padma said shaking her head.

"Indeed. I think I can say that by surprising the niece of the head of the DMLE we have shown the depths of the mystery and deception which is Harry's life," Luna said as she squeezed Harry's hand.

Harry nodded at this. This was the first time all the people (barring Narcissa) who knew a bit about the issues surrounding him had heard the entire story...or at least what Harry and Luna were prepared to tell. Even Lilith who knew the most after Luna had been shocked to hear almost all what Harry and Luna knew or suspected. Harry had Dobby and Winky bring some furniture from Grimmauld Place to replace the dining table so they all could lounge on couches during the long telling of all the events of Harry's life.

Susan shook her head. "Well wow works for me. You know Harry, my auntie wrote to me and asked me to watch out for you and report back to her. Not to spy on you but just watch everything around you and try to get a sense for what is going on. What you just told me explains a lot which she's been thinking about but I'm sure if she were here she'd be as gobsmacked as I am. I must say I hope you have the time to do some personal training for some of us older D.A. members. I want to see if I can channel my core into speeding my

body and perceptions up. Seeing you do it against Weasley and Malfoy was incredible!"

Harry smiled, "No worries Susan. You aunt and I had a pretty frank discussion after the ambush so I'm not surprised she asked you to be her eyes and ears here. She may not have much of the same info I have but she knows enough to distrust the Headmaster. As for the training, well I had planned to work with many of you who accepted the job of back-up teachers. I think recent events have shown we're really on our own. We need to be able to fight and not rely on the Ministry to save us."

Lilith frowned, "I'm up for starting up training with the D.A. as well but I am worried about how wise it is for you to tell us all of these secrets? I'm all for finding out the whole deal but is it smart for Su Li to be here Harry? I mean every one of us has a way to defend against the spy spell but her."

"I agree, Harry. Right now I'm your weak link. I appreciate you trust in telling me all this on Luna and Padma's word alone but this is your life," Su Li said.

Susan took a deep sip of the wine Dobby had brought from the Black wine cellar. "Actually Lilith many of you aren't as safe as you think. First off, in your case the vow you made to Harry didn't break the spy spell. Luna was correct in how it was probably the trauma of your accident. Your pledge was more of a vow of fealty. It wouldn't have the force to break a spell like the Extra Conspectum Oculis. Even Sally and Padma, bond by House and Concubine bounds might not be totally safe. The way I understand the spell is it could very easily still record things which may not be considered 'secret' but can still be worthwhile to whoever cast the spell. Only someone like Luna and myself who have had specific blocks put into us to prevent spells like this are truly safe."

"So what are we going to do?" Sally asked.

Luna smiled, "We are going to do something unexpected."

Harry chuckled at the looks of confusion from most of the witches. "What 'we' are going to do is nothing but obliviate you if you do not wish to go further. As Hermione found out, Narcissa is very good at the spell and if you so choose you'll walk out of here thinking we had

a good time doing something mundane. However if you wish to follow myself and Luna down the path to figure out what is going on, well Padma has found the answer."

Lilith looked at Luna in admiration, "So you were right?"

Luna smiled her self-satisfied smile, "Of course I was. Harry deserves no less!"

The girls chuckled at this. Finally Su Li looked to Padma, "So...was this answer something you found in some musty tome which will make Granger insanely jealous?"

Padma blushed, "Actually I found out about it due to a Bollywood movie Parvati and I saw while visiting some of my cousins down in Kent. It was an adventure yarn about a wizard and six witches who were on a quest to retrieve a magical sword the wizard could use to cast down the evil wizard who had taken his throne. They had a bond which allowed them to share magic and have a feeling of where the others were along with a lot of fanciful things only Muggles could dream up."

Padma paused to see if everyone was keeping up. However even magical born Susan and Su Li was up enough on Muggle technology to understand what she was talking about. "Parvati wasn't very interested in the film but I was because of what my great-grandmum Shakti said about it. When some of the witches did a trick where they boosted the wizard's power through their link I scoffed at this. Honored Shakti had laughed and said even though it was a Muggle movie, the story was based on a real life struggle against a Dark wizard in India centuries ago. She told me while these bondings were rare, they did happen and some of the things they showed in the movie actually were true in the Magical world."

Su Li looked intrigued, "Wait...this group your great-grandmum spoke of, did they have a coven bond?"

Luna looked mildly surprised, "You know of this?"

Su Li looked excited. "Yes but sort of in the same way Padma speaks of. There are stories and legends which speak of covens being formed around a powerful wizard or witch. Often times in China these covens formed to right wrongs and fight injustice. While

a coven bond is powerful, it isn't a commitment entered into lightly. Mostly it was done in ages past when countries did have the laws, the courts and things like aurors. So often times a coven would form to right a wrong the common people could not deal with themselves."

Padma nodded, "Yes and Honored Shakti told me of stories in India of similar covens. A powerful Magical would initiate the coven and then would draw strength from it. While all would share power it would be the initiator who would profit the most. From what Honored Shakti said the power boast could be very significant. Normally witches would form a coven around a powerful wizard but sometimes it would just be witches."

Sally looked confused. "Why is it only a wizard and witches or just witches? Why not a group of wizards?"

"The reason is because the bond is sort of sexual. The initiator bonds the coven in a form of ritualistic marriage. There have been cases where a coven of all wizards is formed but these are rare due to trust issues involved. It is the same with an all witch coven. Normally the coven forms around a powerful wizard who is surrounded by witches." Padma explained.

Lilith grunted in agreement. "Yeah that makes sense."

"How so Lilith?" Harry asked.

"Harry you know I've been studying magic using Muggle scientific theories. Well in evolutionary theory people tend to see competition between species and rarely do they see how competition can actually occur between genders because we have different goals and needs. You would think men and women want the same thing but our biological make-up makes it so our goals are different."

"I don't understand, Lilith. While Jacob's father was a bastard, I would think most men and women have similar goals in life. Find a good spouse, have kids and protect them." Sally said with a frown.

Lilith smiled, "Yes but you are overlooking something fundamental. Take Harry here since he is a perfect example. Even with his aura minder on we all feel his magical aura. Sure his aura is in flux causing the oh so wonderful 'auragasms' a few of us have had the

pleasure of experiencing. Yet even when it stabilizes the truth is Harry will still be sending out a subtle signal we witches will respond to."

"Auragasm?" Susan asked with a raised eyebrow.

"We'll tell you when you're older," Harry said with a grin.

"So Harry sends out his magical signal which acts on us witches to tell us how powerful he is. In Muggle science term this is called an honest indicator because you can't fake it. You either are magically powerful or you are not. It sort of why guys tend to like girls with big breasts and hips; they increase the chance of successful childbirth. They don't consciously realize this but they are descended from children who survived because of it so they replicate this successful breeding behavior. Again your hip size isn't something you can readily change unlike things like status or wealth. Yet how would this be different if say someone like Susan here had the same aura? She'd attracted lots of wizards to her but with a critical difference compared to Harry."

"Oh! I get it!" Sally exclaimed. "Susan could attract lots of wizards but unless they were really powerful she couldn't really tell who the best was."

Lilith nodded, "Exactly! Susan would have a lesser chance of knowing who would be the best person to have a child with. This is critical because since she can only get with child from one wizard at a time. Thus a mistake is a bigger deal than it would be for Harry. This is the crucial difference and is why men and women often react very differently in the same situation. Since Susan could only get pregnant by one man, she'd have to choose very carefully. Harry here doesn't have that problem. He can impregnate any witch he wants to. True he can't be sure which is the best witch but it doesn't matter since he can hedge his bet by impregnate them all. So in this case he can act like a lion and rule over his pride while for Susan it would be better to find the best wizard and stick mostly with him."

Harry grimaced, "I'd rather not think of myself as a lion any more, Lilith."

"Well you did want her to tone down the whole Mr. Grim and his bitches theme, oh speaker to snakes," Luna said with a merry glint in her eye.

The girls all laughed at this as Harry groaned. He was never going to live that comment down.

"It makes sense most covens are led by a powerful male with a lot of witches as Lilith has explained," Padma continued. "Again while the coven bond is not exactly a sexual bond, historically it is sealed sexually since between Magicals it allows for a deeper intimacy. You can make any oath you want but when your auras merge you get a good feeling for the other person. While my case is extreme I can definitely say I found most of what I thought about Harry was wrong."

"This is probably why covens are never a mix of wizard and witches. There would be too much jealousy among the wizards. The 'lesser' wizards would always strive to topple the 'alpha wolf' and take all the witches for their own." Su Li said thoughtfully.

"I can also see why witches would bond into such a coven. Sure they have to share the wizard but because of his power, the witches would at least know their child would probably be stronger as well. Seeing how important magical power and blood is seen in the Magical world, I'm sure the witches felt it was worth it to share him," Lilith said thoughtfully.

"While all of that makes sense, I thought you said this was a ritualistic marriage to create a group to right wrongs. Why worry about children? I mean if you are going around trying to overthrow injustice I wouldn't think you'd be concerned about powerfully magical kids." Sally asked.

Susan nodded, "That is true Sally but we also have to look at fighting like that is very stressful which can lead to a build up of excess magic. People all think the life of an auror is all glamorous but most of the times when they go into a dangerous situation it turns out to be nothing. However the stress was real and so is the magical build up. Go too long without releasing that energy and you'll start to have problems. Just ask any Quidditch player; they can tell you all about that." Susan said with a gesture towards Harry who nodded his agreement.

Susan paused for a moment to gather her thoughts. "I can tell you from personal experience there was a lot of stress last year when the D.A. was sneaking around. Even though we spent a lot of energy during the meetings, the possibility of getting caught was constant. I ended up having a lot of girl-sex time with Hannah because we both were so keyed up. Since we Magicals tend to use sex to help purge this excess energy we run into the fact when we Magicals have sex our auras merge a bit. Like Padma said, it causes a much deeper commitment. So while Muggle cops, soldiers or firefighters often form deep bonds, we Magicals tend to go a bit further."

"So you're saying over time it is almost inevitable there would be children?" Sally asked.

Susan shrugged, "I'm just saying that after fighting the good fight I doubt after all was said and done that the witches would leave empty handed as it were. Also I would think many would see it as their due. Besides if you were part of a group which overthrew a Dark Lord I doubt anyone would say anything about you getting knocked up by the wizard you helped do it. I mean take you case Sally. Harry saved you from a terrible fate. Let's say you joined a coven formed by him and fought Death Eaters for a year or two. Would you consider having a child with him?"

Sally blushed, "Well I'm not sure but yes I think I might considering how I've seen Harry in action. Actually come to think of it I would think a lot of witches who had been involved in fighting would put their lives on hold till it was all over. Once the danger was passed they'd probably want to settle down and start a family so yes I see your point. It isn't a given but all the factors sort of push towards it."

There was a pause after Harry gave a thoughtful grunt. The girls all watched him as he stroked his chin obviously thinking hard. Finally Harry shook his head, "I'm surprise Dumbledore didn't do something like this against Grindelwald or Voldemort. I may not trust the Old Man but he is very knowledgeable and has contacts with witches and wizards from all around the world. If a coven could boost his powers, why not take it? From what I've read the fight against Grindelwald was no joke. I mean yes he has the Order of the Phoenix but they don't directly make him more powerful like you say a coven bond would."

Su Li shook her head, "Maybe he couldn't bring himself to trust. The coven bond is about trust after all. A trust where you know your coven mates will die for you as you would die for them. To open yourself up because there can be little room for secrets. From what you have told me, the Headmaster does not seem a wizard who would be so open. For a Gryffindor he is most Slytherin in that respect,"

Luna also shook her head, "I also think a coven would be seen as a threat. Considering how conservative England is on top of trying to keep the status quo, I do not think even Dumbledore could get away with forming a coven. It would make him even more powerful and this would most certainly trigger a move against him politically."

Harry stood up and looked at the witches before him. "Okay well this is getting way past what I had intended. I was just looking for a way to keep my secrets while I tried to defeat Voldemort and figure out why the Old Man has meddled so much in my life. I guess we will just have to keep looking. I figure the best thing to do right now would be to draw out certain memories and store them. You can't give away what you don't have in your memories anymore. I'd rather not get into the habit of needing to obliviate my friends."

Susan looked at him oddly, "Harry why are you discounting the idea of forming a coven? It sounds like the perfect thing to do considering how things are."

Harry looked at Susan in surprise. Even more so because most of the other girls seem to look like they agreed with her. "Susan, I'm on a dark and dangerous road and I have many secrets I need to protect before I can finish up what seems to be my fate. I'm not about to drag you all along just to break a spell no matter how bad that spell is."

"Hold on a minute Harry!" Lilith said hotly, "Why do you think you have to go face this fate by yourself? Do you think you are the only one affected by the Dark Lord? In case you forgot I was almost killed by a Death Eater last month! How do you think the Muggleborns are going to fare if the Dark Lord wins?"

"My parents and uncle all died fighting the Dark Lord, Harry." Susan joined in. "I have just as much reason to want to fight him as you do."

The fact I do not have a prophecy hanging over me is immaterial. House Bones fights for the right and we always have!"

"Besides from what Luna has said this isn't just about Voldemort," Su Li said quietly. "You were left in the care of your abusive relatives illegally, Luna was abused by her father and both Lilith and Sally were forgotten the moment they had to leave Hogwarts. Also as witches all of us are treated as second class citizens. Susan is as much of a 'lord' as you; maybe more so because she is trained in the ways of Magical England. Yet she will be nothing more than just Lady Bones because she's a witch. There is graft and corruption and bigotry here in Britain and I know you hate it. Do you not see how we all have our own reasons to want to fight?"

Harry looked at Luna who had an enigmatic smile on her face. "Why are you surprised by this my Dark Lord, my love? I told you I saw other witches swearing themselves to you. I was not sure how but I knew I would not be alone in standing with you as you shook the very foundations of Magical Britain. As Su Li has said, every witch, even ones with the most purest of blood from the wealthiest family is still lower than a wizard in the eyes of the Ministry and the Wizengamot. How can you be surprised we wish to fight this? Voldemort is just a symptom of a much deeper disease."

"Harry, while I want to be more than just a mother the truth is how can I rest knowing my angel is at risk from the Dark Lord and his Death Eaters? How can I rest when I know if I have a daughter that she will always be seen as not as worthy as Jacob simply because she isn't male?" Sally asked.

Harry looked over to Padma who had been silently listening, "What about you Padma? What is your take on all this?"

"I'm a witch Harry and worse I'm a non-white witch. While I'm one of the best students in Hogwarts I can't seem to rise above being a 'mere wog' in the eyes of others. Other cultures celebrate the concubine bond as an admission that love often cannot be contained between just one man and woman. In England I will be treated like dirt because of the color of my skin and seen as a probable sex toy simply because of our bond together. How could any right thinking person not want to help overthrow such a system?"

Harry stood silently for a moment as he looked around the room again. All the witches had determined looks on their faces. "Are you all sure about this? I mean Susan I know you and I have had a lot of dealings in D.A. but we're not much more than casual friends. Now you're telling me you'd bond with me and all these other girls? Sally, Lilith no offense but neither one of you has shown much interest in such things prior to this. Su Li and Padma? You're really only here because of my problem with my aura."

Before any of the girls could protest Luna silenced them with a gesture. She stood and took Harry's hands in her own and looked deeply into his eyes. She knew how easy it was for Harry to become lost in her gaze. She loved it but also knew in this case it would shut him up so she could talk and hopefully get him to understand.

"Harry remember our first night together? We talked long into the night of many things. I told you of my own Sight and how I knew you were destined for grander things. You have finally accepted how you are an instrument of Fate, the very sword of Nemesis. Why do you seem surprised to find yourself surrounded by the very people you need to help you achieve that destiny?"

Harry broke himself away from the azure depths of Luna's eyes. "I don't know Luna; it seems too simple...to pat. It's like something lame you'd see in a badly written show."

Padma laughed, "Harry you must realize something about magic. They don't really teach it here in England but pretty much everywhere else magic is seen as almost alive. Think of magic like the Force. You've seen the Yank Star Wars films yes? Magic is alive as just another part of all life. Life is about rhythms and right now those rhythms have been broken. Like a river which has been blocked, the magical currents will push and pull until the river flows free again. It may sound trite or unbelievable but in a sense we are here because we were destined to be."

Harry frowned, "So we all are just Fate's playthings? Nothing we do makes a difference? Were just playing out a pre-written role?"

Luna leaned in and kissed Harry, "Not at all, my love. We are all here because of choices we have made. Choice is the most important thing in all of creation. People can wail about how cruel their fate can be but the real truth is the currents of life can only use

what is there. The others are here because the fit what is needed. However even now they can choose to stand or step aside. Think of it Harry, you have wealth and power now. You could choose to leave England to Voldemort. Yet you have stayed and mostly it is because you do not wish to leave your friends to die. You have chosen to risk death so that others need not suffer and die. Fate did not force you to do this. You have chosen to stay and fight."

Luna gestured around the room, "All of the witches here may have lesser reasons to why they are in this room but all of them have a reason to fight just as you do. Even with Fate pushing them to be here, they still have the choice to follow you. My ancestors knew well when they spoke of the Wyrd. You cannot escape your Wyrd but you make your own fate. You can never go back and reclaim what has been taken from you, Harry James Potter, nor can you escape the brutal upbringing you suffered at the hands of your relatives. You cannot escape it anymore than you can change being the son of James and Lily Potter or being the heir to the House of Peverell for example."

Luna turned back to Harry, "Yet here you stand still filled with hope and the desire to fight injustice. Those are choices you chose to make in spite of a childhood which would have crushed most children. Tom Riddle let his life taint him to the point of mutilating his own soul but here you are filled with the burning desire to save others from such evil. Every year here in Hogwarts you have selflessly chosen to help others in need. Fate can only push the pieces into place but in the end a choice must be made to either act or not. Those who choose not to act will be replaced with others that will. Those here tonight have chosen to act."

Susan's stood, "Luna is right Harry. We do have a choice. You were right when you said I have little reason to get involved on the face of it. We don't know each other as well as we probably should but that is because of the stupid house system here at Hogwarts. Yes I know I am mostly here because you know I'm protected from the spy spell more than anything else. But I am here and after hearing everything going on I want to be a part of bringing about change. If anything I am happy for whatever reason allowed me to be here. I want to avenge the dead of House Bones by putting down Voldemort and I want to change Britain for the better. Even more so because my aunt is the exception to the usual lot of witches. Su Li was right about the injustice of why you get to be Lord Potter while I have to

wait for a son to become Lord Bones. I'm a Hufflepuff and we have always done what needs to be done and damn it all change is long overdue!"

Lilith stood, "I pledged myself to you already Harry. Come what may I will follow you wherever you lead. I don't know what I can do to help but if the road is dark then at the very least I will light the way so the darkness doesn't consume you."

Sally stood, "Harry you saved me and my son from Hell on Earth and for that alone I would follow you. I know I'm little more than a glorified seamstress but I will do whatever it takes to help out. Even if it is just being the coven's house elf I will do what needs to be done. No witch should ever have to endure what I did. I want to help see it doesn't happen again."

Padma stood, "Harry I'm bound to you so I have to follow you. Regardless of the bond I would stand with you as well as with Luna. She has always been my friend and I trust her. If she says you have a destiny then that is enough for me. Because of our bond, though, I can feel your power and I know you are the one who can actually back up their desire to change how things are. How could I not follow you knowing this?"

Su Li stood, "I agree with Padma. I trust Luna and I too can feel your power. I more than anyone know your aura makes it easier for all of us to want to join you. I admit that. The stakes, however, are too high to do nothing. Due to my gift I shall probably become a Healer like so many in my family before me. There is war coming and it falls to the Healers to try to repair the costs of such a war. The choice to fight Voldemort is easy. He would inflame the world in war. I cannot stand aside and watch it happen."

Luna kissed Harry again lightly. "There will be others who will join. Many will do because of the cause and many because they love you Harry. Su Li and Padma are right, it isn't just about you. The coven would strengthen you but it is a bond between us all. Su Li and Padma are my sisters in all but blood. If Hannah were to join I'm sure it would be the same with her and Susan. I think that is why the bond is sexual; physical love can often express what words cannot."

Harry stared at Luna for a moment; he was again lost in her eyes. It was catching him off guard how he could feel so deeply for different

girls in different ways. He was beginning to realize he loved Katie Bell. It surprised him but the truth was there had always been more than just a Quidditch relationship between them. As odd as it sounded, Harry hadn't truly realized this until she was madly humping his leg while they kissed while Cho had been sucking him off. No matter the bizarre situation, the feelings were real. He could no longer ignore them.

Harry knew he also loved Luna with all his heart as well. It was a different feeling but the intensity was there. Then there was Hermione. Regardless of her recent betrayal Harry knew he loved Hermione...and probably always had. If this was the case why could he not open himself up to these other girls? He had certainly grown quite close to Lilith and while the sexual orgy he had with Su Li was driven by need Harry had gotten a good vibe from the quirky little Ravenclaw. He thought back to the night before and of the feelings he had with Katie and Cho. Luna had been right; the very physical nature of the sex they had had brought about a shared feeling of love and trust between the three of them.

All the girls waited as these thoughts caused Harry's face to change a bit as he mulled things over. They all knew on a subconscious level the decision was his. He would be the initiator and they would follow him if he chose to take up the mantle of leadership.

Harry chuckled. The chuckle turned into a laugh. The laugh was filled with happiness and more than a hint of the disdain one had when pranking an enemy.

"Care to share, oh speaker to snakes?" Luna said with a sultry smile.

Harry stopped laughing only to chuckle a bit more. Finally he grinned, "Oh I just thought about when Dumbledore told me about the prophecy. He felt the 'power He knew not' was love. I thought the Old Man was shoveling a load of twaddle. Now I'm thinking he might be right but I don't think he was expecting this!"

Susan chuckled a bit as well, "You know Harry I think Su Li was right about the Headmaster. It is obvious he uses lies, half-truths and deceit. In many ways he is just as bad as Voldemort. He used people like your parents and mine like mere chess pieces. Now the children of those 'pieces' will fight him with one thing you started last year: trust and love. You 'loved' us enough to take the chance in

training us. That sort of love breeds trust. I agree with Luna; there are others who will join because they feel the love you have and will trust you to see us through."

Harry nodded at Susan. "So Padma, how big can covens get?"

Padma shrugged, "Well from what I got from Honored Shakti, a coven is often the core of a larger group. Not all who fight have to be bonded. I'm sure you wouldn't turn away people like Anthony, Neville or Justin because they are wizards and can't enter into the bond. However she said most covens tend to be magical numbers. Usually around seven, nine or thirteen.

"Well we have seven right now so I guess we're good." Harry said.

"No...it will be seventeen," Luna said suddenly.

"Why seventeen Luna? I didn't think that was a very magical number," Sally asked.

Luna closed her eyes and hummed to herself for a bit. After a bit she stopped and looked back up at Harry, "You will have four from each House. Four ravens, lions, snakes and badgers...all led by you, the Grim." Luna's voice had a sense of certainty to it as if she was speaking of something set in stone.

"Four from the air, four from fire, four from water and four from earth. Your spirit shall bind us together." Luna almost sang. The girls all looked amazed as none but Harry had seen her while the Sight was upon her. Finally Luna's eyes seemed to focus back on the present and her face broke into an embarrassed smile.

Harry kissed her deeply. "It seems once again, my choice or not, my path is clear. So be it. Since you will have me I will make this coven and I will accept your bonds of trust and love. I still can't believe this is happening but Luna was right. The river needs to run free and it looks like I'm the one who has to do it." Harry was trying hard to sound as serious as he could. The situation seemed to warrant it but he couldn't help thinking it sounded pompous and melodramatic. He wondered about some of the speeches Binns had had them learn and he couldn't help but wonder if those people thought the same thing as they spoke their 'inspiring' words.

Pompous sounding or not, it had the effect he was hoping for. All the girls looked serious but none of them looked like they were going to back down. Harry looked at around and made eye contact with each with in turn just to be sure. All he saw was resolve and determination.

Harry nodded at this. He took a deep breath since once again it felt like Fate was solidifying around him. "Once we find out the proper ritual to use I say this: Let the coven be formed!"

XxXxX

A/N: It is always a good idea to reread the previous chapter before reading a new one. This is a work in progress and so far there hasn't been a chapter which hasn't had some content added, changed or deleted before the next chapter comes out. So if you read chapter 16 once, especially right after I posted it, chances are it has changed since this was written. Considering I just altered the 'Harry vs. Gryffindor' scene at the end of Chapter 16 before switching over to write this A/N is a good example of the need for rereading previous chapters.

Update the First: I cannot do math...that is all.

Temperature: For all you Americans (like me) an 18 degree centigrade temperature drop is equivalent to a 30 degree Fahrenheit drop.

Katie Bell: According to the HP Wiki, she's described as having brown eyes w/brown hair. Yet in almost every picture of her, this seems to changes. So by author fiat, she is a blonde with blue eyes. Why? To contrast her more sharply with Alicia Spinnet who looks like she's either of Middle Eastern origin (plenty of places in the British Empire for her to be from in that region) or Indian. Or more to the point her father is English and her mother is Indian. Considering how long India was the 'jewel in the crown of the British Empire' I'm going with that. Obviously Angelina is of African descent. So I'm thinking the 'Flying Foxes of Gryffindor' are not only good looking but are also more striking due to their differences.

Names: Ever wonder how I get names for 'new' characters? No? Well dang...well if you did care it goes like this. I see the need for a character. I do a little research to see if there is a character that could fill the need (such as Colin becoming the male Gryffindor 5th

year prefect) – If there isn't one I head over to the Harry Potter Lexicon or Harry Potter Wiki. I will then cruise around to find a family name. Matilda Toke came about because a Tilly Toke defeated a dragon in 1932 and ended up on a Chocolate Frog card. Considering how often in canon and fanon how kids are named after relatives, I figured Matilda was named after her presumable (great?) grandmother. Similarly Valentine Gudgeon came about because of Davy Gudgeon who almost lost an eye to the Whomping Willow. Okay, he's "stupidly brave" so I looked for a name meaning brave or maybe brave in the way of trending towards 'Darwin Award' brave. His daughter Valentine was the closest female equivalent to Valiant. Similarly Rhodri Dearborn is the son of Caradoc Dearborn who was an Order Member in the First War.

Other than 'borrowing' characters I like from other fics, I feel just using some sort of random name generator which seems to be the way many fics get their OC names creates names which feel out of place in the "Harryverse" – A little research and creative thinking can avoid this in my biased opinion.

Mystery: Anyone want to guess who was in the broom closet? =)~

Chp18